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STEWART CHANEY

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The HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

VOL. XIII. No. 7

A National Publication Devoted to Dramatics in the Secondary Schools

35c Per Copy

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APRIL, 1942



PLAYS FOR SPRING PRODUCTION

EVER SINCE EVE

By Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements

This new comedy of youth by the authors of *June Mad* is the mirthful story of Susan Blake and her hectic experiences as assistant editor of the school paper. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

YES AND NO

By Kenneth Horne

A refreshing new comedy that is different; Act 1 showing what might have happened if our heroine had said "No"; Act 2 showing what might have happened if our heroine had said "Yes"; and the epilogue showing what actually happened. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

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By Zoe Akins

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WESTERN UNION, PLEASE

By Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich

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NIGHT MUST FALL

By Emyln Williams

An outstanding success in London, New York, and in the motion pictures. Fascinating psychopath Dan is a bell-hop who continually acts for himself and the world, all the while he plans and executes a spine-tingling murder. A thrill play of character, shrewdly lightened by comedy. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

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By Allan Langdon Martin

The familiar and always-touching story of the gentle spirit-bride. A tender love story which has met with success everywhere. 75c. (Royalty, \$35.00.)

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By James Thurber and Elliott Nugent

Tommy Turner, a young college professor, is faced with two problems—a romantic one and an academic one. The solution of one forces the solution of the other. Paper, 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

THE GHOST FLIES SOUTH

By Frederick Jackson

This light comedy by the author of *The Bishop Misbehaves* is concerned with the amusing escapades of Anita and Morgan, engaged, and their determination to fool each other about the \$4000 Anita has won on the stock-market. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

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THE THIRTEENTH CHAIR

By Bayard Veiller

This thriller is based on the assumption that one of the several persons actually seen on the stage by the audience killed another in such a way as to baffle the cleverest sleuths. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

THE FAMILY UPSTAIRS

By Harry Delf

A wholesome and honest comedy dealing with a typical home and what happens when the mother concocts the story that her unpopular daughter's first love is a big banker. A game of bluff designed for laughter. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

THE BASHFUL BACHELOR

By Anne Ferring Weatherly

What happens to a bashful author who seeks solitude but finds excitement, romance, crime, and hilarity in a girls' college town. 50c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

MR. AND MRS. NORTH

By Owen Davis

Based on the New Yorker magazine stories by Frances and Richard Lockridge. Here is a mystery-comedy of real folk caught in a web of plausible and amusing situations. Produced with great success in New York during the past season. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, 75c. (Royalty, \$35.00.)

CHARLEY'S AUNT

By Brandon Thomas

Revived on Broadway this past season with resounding success and made into a smash hit picture with Jack Benny. This is the timeless story of the undergraduate who impersonated the aunt of one of his friends. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

By Francis Swann

A successful Broadway comedy in which six stage-struck young people share an apartment and many humorous situations. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

LITTLE WOMEN

By John Ravold

This is a new dramatization in one set of the famous and always-popular Alcott novel. Mr. Ravold has dexterously and humorously woven the story without omitting one salient incident. 50c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

BRIEF MUSIC

By Emmet Lavery

A refreshing, straightforward comedy of character, taking seven girls through three years of college life. Their various problems are treated in a manner which is dramatic, gentle and understanding. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

I'M IN THE ARMY NOW

By Ned Albert

This is not a war play but a bright and heart-warming domestic comedy in which a young draftee comes home on furlough and applies army tactics to the solution of household difficulties. 50c. (Budget Play).

A CERTAIN YOUNG MISS

By Bill Johnson

A refreshing comedy, all about Tabbie Philips who plunges her family into bewildering and amusing troubles and then extricates them after a day of hilarious juggling of situation. 60c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

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THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

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TROUPE 500 ESTABLISHED

INSTALLATION CEREMONY
HELD MARCH 19

AT THE MARYSVILLE, KANSAS, HIGH SCHOOL



CHARTER MEMBERS

of Troupe No. 500 of the Marysville, Kansas, High School are shown in the picture at left.

Bottom Row (Left to Right): Dolores Farrell, Miss Mabel E. Campbell, Founder and Sponsor of the Troupe, Aggie Jo Greweldenger, Bill Hatch, Dorothy Cooper, Donna Lee Lynx-wiler, Wanda Rogers.

Middle Row (Left to Right): Robert Arnold, George Cockran, Eugene Wullschlegler, Bill Rickert, James Storrs, Nelda Shippers, Helen Temps, Margaret Geiger.

Top Row (Left to Right): Mr. Ross Kinsley, President of the Board of Education, Mr. John Mollinger, Board Treasurer, Dr. E. B. Hinshaw, Board Vice-President, Principal R. F. Rowland, Superintendent of Schools D. E. Wolgast, Mr. George Griffiths, Board Clerk, and Mr. W. C. King, Board Member.

fits derived from the study of drama, Marysville High School has affiliated with The National Thespian Society. We are extremely proud to say that we have taken a stride forward in histrionic work."

In addition to the fourteen students who took the Thespian pledge as charter members, honorary membership was conferred at the close of the ceremony upon Superintendent D. E. Wolgast, Principal R. E. Rowland, and the members of the Board of Education, R. K. Kinsley, Dr. E. B. Hinshaw, Andrew Hahn, A. L. Park, R. R. Ridler, Will C. King, George B. Griffiths, and John Mollinger.

The establishment of Troupe 500 at the Marysville High School marks a milestone in the growth of the National Thespian Society, and represents the realization of a goal set early in the spring of 1929 when the society was founded. A new goal of a thousand troupes by 1950 has been set by the Council. In view of the coast-to-coast reputation for service enjoyed by the society among progressive high school dramatics teachers, there is every indication that the goal of a thousand troupes will be realized by 1950. Active and alumni members of the society now number approximately 50,000.

Membership Going Up

SINCE mid-February when Charter 500 was granted to the Marysville High School, the following schools have also received membership in The National Thespian Society:

Troupe No. 501 to the Salinas, Calif., Union High School, Mr. Harold H. Ulrici, Sponsor.
Troupe No. 502 to the Martinsburg, W. Va., High School, Miss Mary V. Dean, Sponsor.
Troupe No. 503 to the John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pa., Miss Permelia Rose, Sponsor.

Troupe No. 504 to the Baton Rouge, La., High School, Miss Alma Belle Womack, Sponsor.

Troupe No. 505 to Puryear, Tenn., High School, Miss Rassie Mae Pitman, Sponsor.

Thank You, Mr. Wolgast

To Thespians Everywhere:

It has been a real source of satisfaction and pleasure for us to have Marysville High School included among those schools honored by membership in The National Thespian Society. An active dramatic group, under capable direction such as we have, is a real asset to any school and will go far toward building desirable morale in the student body and community.

I am convinced that speech and dramatic activity is one of our best means of developing self-confidence, poise and self-reliance in our students. Other related activity such as make-up, stage decorating, costuming and business management of plays all contribute much to the education and development of participating students.

To our dramatic coaches, Miss Mabel E. Campbell and her predecessors, goes the credit for bringing our dramatic department up to the high degree of accomplishment they are now enjoying. Miss Campbell and her group presented a number of excellent plays during the present term, *The Eyes of Tlaloc* and *Come, Let Us Adore Him* headlining the group.

We feel that the honor of affiliation with National Thespian Society will inspire greater activity and accomplishments in our dramatic program and we pledge ourselves to cooperate with you in upholding the high purposes of Thespian.

D. E. WOLGAST, Superintendent
Marysville High School,
Marysville, Kansas.

will provide an excellent way to teach students wise use of their leisure time," writes Miss Campbell. "I feel drama has and will continue to be a vital force in the life of man. To bring students into a closer realization of the fundamental bene-

WITH the stage decorated in the Thespian colors of blue and gold, and the Society's motto in the background, Troupe No. 500 of the National Thespian Dramatic Honor Society was formally installed on March 19 at the Marysville, Kansas, High School. Present for the happy occasion were patrons of the school, members of the Board of Education, school officials, faculty members, and students.

An impressive ceremony, with the installation team and initiates in formal dress, was conducted under the general direction of Miss Mabel E. Campbell, founder and sponsor for the new Troupe, and director of dramatics at Marysville. The program was as follows:

Presentation.....Superintendent D. E. Wolgast
"The Thespian Beam".....Ernest Lange ('43)
Troupe President (pro tem)

Candlelight Service:
"Seven Steps in the History of Drama,"
Mary F. Artman, Wendell Lind, Derrold Wiley, Allene Kersten, Mary Greweldenger, Mary L. Kinsley and Kathleen Monohan.

"Unveiling and Presentation of Charter".....Kenneth Rowland ('44)
Troupe Treasurer-elect
"Acceptance"....Mr. R. F. Rowland, Principal
"Now A Thespian".....Margaret Geiger ('42)
President of Dramatics Club

At the close of the ceremony congratulatory letters and telegrams from national officers and members of the Thespian Society were read.

"We feel that the presence of The National Thespian Society will serve as a strong and wholesome incentive for greater participation in dramatics activities and

Broadway at a Glance

by MARGARET WENTWORTH

Broadway Drama Critic, New York City

FEWER plays opened during February and many closed almost at once. The opening and closing often seemed capricious, especially when *Solitaire*, a charming, delicate story of a child's mind and heart closed, and *Cafe Crown*, a routine sort of farce, remains.

Heart of a City

One of the best of the newcomers is Gilbert Miller's *Heart Of A City*. Like *The Wookey* earlier in the season, it is a play of war-time London. *The Wookey* was written by an American man and deals with a cockney family; *Heart Of A City* is the work of an English woman, a newspaper correspondent and is concerned with theatre folk. The Windmill Theatre was founded in London as a show-shop in which young actors got a chance to be seen. It staged a variety program of skits, songs and dances and went on from 2 to 11 p. m. It has the distinction of being the only theatre in London which never closed during the worst of the blitz.

Lesley Storm, who wrote the play, has spent much time backstage with the actors and while the incidents and characters of the play are fictitious, they are true to the courage and spirit of the youthful troupe. Not only do they keep on singing and dancing whether there is any audience worth mentioning or not; they knit and roll bandages in their spare time, though they are bleary-eyed from trying to sleep in crowded air-raid shelters. They give first-aid and act as fire-wardens and do it all without display or self-consciousness, taking it in their stride. An excellent portrait is that of the producer and director, tactful, firm, encouraging and rebuking as the case may be, a model for any stage manager to imitate. As in *The Wookey*, a sound track of a raid is used verisimilitude. An amusing scene is the one in which the troupe being on visit to an Air unit, the pilots unite to suppress any remark which might have the remotest tendency to boasting. One of these pilots, returning the visit and getting caught in a raid exclaims feelingly,

"Crickety! Is that what it sounds like? I'd make a lousy civilian!"

Humor, pathos, romance and gallantry make *Heart Of A City* an inspiring play to see. If and when we have blitzes here may we do as well—no one could do better.

Guest in the House

Guest In The House is a little on the order of *The Man Who Came To Dinner* but "the female of the species is more deadly than the male." The girl guest who

came to the Proctors suffering from heart trouble was definitely a psychopathic case and spread disfusion around her.

The play is adapted from a short story by Katherine Albert. The happily married, prosperous Proctors felt so sorry for this frail girl that they issued her an invitation to become a member of their household. Aunt Martha, who had spent years of her life caring for an invalid brother, warned them that there is no tyranny like that of the weak and that self-sacrifice is often futile. The girl who comes is so clinging, so sweet and pretty—how can she be dangerous? But she starts in making their little daughter as neurotic as herself, drives a wedge between husband and wife, infuriates the servants and at last defies them to turn her out by threatening to create a scandal which she promptly does. The means by which a peaceful ending for the play is furnished is drastic but by that time we are prepared to poison the young mischief-maker ourselves.

The part is played by Mary Anderson, who, like her famous namesake, is making her debut in a leading part and does it extremely well. Katherine Emmet plays Aunt Martha and Louise Campbell and Leon Ames are the harassed couple. Humorous scenes relieve the play and the suspense holds till the final curtain.

Of "V" We Sing

Of "V" We Sing is a revue put on by a group called the American Youth Theatre. Obviously, they hope to have an entertainment similar to *Pins And Needles* or at least *Meet The People*. But their material is not nearly so good as either of these and their singing and dancing is more amateurish. Much hard work on their part and a good deal of pruning and rewriting on their skits will be needed before the entertainment can really be classed as up to professional standards.

The Flowers of Virtue

Burns Mantle has suggested that there should be salvage theatres for the plays which are nice but not smash hits. One such was *The Flowers Of Virtue* by Marc Connelly. Frank Craven played a tired American business man who had gone to a little pueblo in Mexico for a rest and found there the beginnings of fascism, which he helped to nip in the bud. The set was charming and the play well acted but such simple plays rarely succeed nowadays.

Plan M

Plan M was a melodrama which might have gone better when we were not at

war. Its melodrama seemed even more unreal and shocking now than it would have a few months ago. It dealt with a Nazi plot by which the Minister of War was killed and an enemy duplicate put in his place. *Plan M* was the plan to be used when England was actually invaded. The intruder substituted a false plan which sent planes and tanks far away from the point which was really to be attacked. The situation is saved at the last possible moment. Psychologically, it was true that the impostor betrayed himself by his overweening pride and his inability to continue counterfeiting the patience with his colleagues which was a distinguishing trait of the real man. Margery Maude, daughter of Cyril, had the woman's lead.

Under This Roof

Under This Roof is a play by a Boston lawyer, thoughtfully written if not exciting. It shows three crises in the life of the Warrens. The scene is a farmhouse built in the 1770's by the founder of the family. The two sons are both in love with a cousin. It is 1846 and the war with Mexico is in progress. The younger son realizes that its result will be to bring in Texas as a slave state and he goes to Missouri to fight against compromise. The girl loves him but is too weak to follow him and marries his brother who promises her security. Next we are in the Civil War and her son, not yet eighteen, volunteers and is killed. In 1867 her husband is drawn into speculation connected with the Pacific Railroad. An amusing scene shows that crooked promoters and politicians were the same seventy-five years ago as now. The last act brings the panic of 1873 and repentance to her husband who let the honorable name of Warren become smirched. The play has its say about the freedoms for which we fight and for the fight we must wage to retain them.

Café Crown

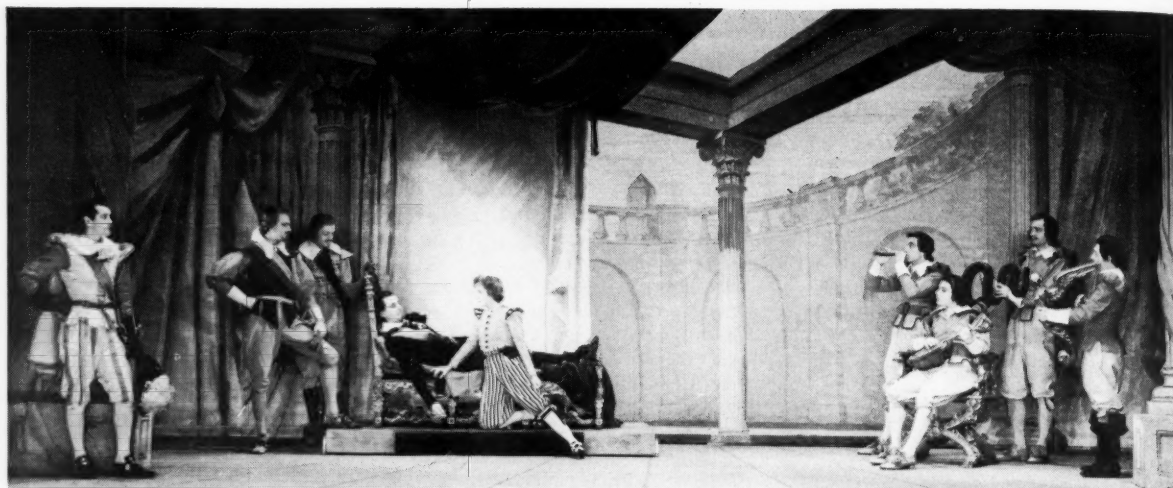
Café Crown is a Jewish comedy laid in a café frequented by actors from the Yiddish theatre near by and by playwrights seeking producers. Sam Jaffe, proprietor of the place, says pathetically that he makes money there only to lose it all by backing the shows put on by his friend, Morris Carnovsky. The audience does not feel it so vital that the Yiddish theatre should have Shakespearean productions as the author seemed to, but the large cast is very natural and the wisecracks amusing, if somewhat too stereotyped.

On Tour

Macbeth, *Claudia* and *Watch On The Rhine* are on tour. If any of you Thespians have the opportunity to see any of them you will find it a privilege. It is unfortunate that play production is so concentrated in New York that it is only now and then that good plays are accessible elsewhere. I would urge all Thespians to seize every chance to see good plays.

The Duke's palace in the Theatre Guild's production of *Twelfth Night*. Scenery and costumes designed by Stewart Chaney.

(Photo courtesy Vandamm Studio and Stewart Chaney.)



Stewart Chaney

by BARNARD HEWITT

Chairman, Dramatics Committee, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.

COMPARED to most of the designers in this series, Stewart Chaney is a mere youngster. His Broadway career dates only from 1935 when he designed the settings and costumes for Zöe Akins' *The Old Maid*. This was really his first Broadway assignment, but it brought immediate recognition of his talents. John Mason Brown reviewing *The Old Maid* for the *New York Post* wrote: "Mr. Chaney deserves special credit for his costumes and settings. Not only are they among the season's best, but they also bespeak a taste in line and color which means that they have introduced a designer to the American Theatre whose future bears close watching."

The Old Maid won the Pulitzer Prize, and the extent of Chaney's contribution to its success brought him further assignments, in the execution of which he has



Prof. Hewitt

proved Brown a true prophet. He has done settings for revivals of Ibsen's *Ghosts* and *Hedda Gabler* with Nazimova in the leading roles, for Arthur Kober's *Having Wonderful Time*, and for the enormously successful comedy, *Life With Father*, that Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse made out of Clarence Day's sketches. He designed *Hamlet* for Leslie Howard's production, and most recently the Theatre Guild production of *Twelfth Night* with Margaret Webster directing and Helen Hayes and Maurice Evans as stars.

To the casual observer, it might seem that Chaney was the fair-haired child of fortune, scoring immediate success, becoming a leading designer almost overnight. In actual fact, however, that initial triumph with *The Old Maid* was preceded by years of study and struggle in which Broadway must often have seemed to Chaney an entirely unattainable goal. Chaney hails from Kansas City, where participation in plays in high school gave him the first impetus toward his profession. An indirect impetus it was, however, for he first thought he wanted to become

a playwright. Drawn by the reputation of Professor George Pierce Baker as a teacher of playwriting, he entered the Yale Department of Drama in 1926. The Yale Department of Drama requires all its students, whether they want to be scene designers, actors, directors, or playwrights, to secure a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of all the departments of the complex art of the theatre, including scene design. In this process Chaney's attention was drawn away from playwriting, and when in 1928 he left Yale to try his luck on Broadway, he brought with him not a trunkful of scripts but a headful of ideas about scenery, and a portfolio of designs.

Broadway has no welcome for untried and inexperienced youth, so Chaney secured a job as display designer for one of the big department stores while he looked for an opportunity, any opportunity, to show what he would do in the theatre. The long and circuitous road he travelled to eventual Broadway recognition is perhaps worth describing, for it is probably very much the same road that any would-be designer must traverse to-

The dull scene in Leslie Howard's production of *Hamlet*. Setting and costumes were designed by Stewart Chaney.

(Photo courtesy Vandamm Studio and Stewart Chaney.)



day. The Community Art Theatre of the Oranges in New Jersey gave him his first chance to turn designs into settings. His work for the Art Theatre was not exciting, but it brought him an invitation in 1931 to design for the Ann Arbor Spring Drama Festival. The summer theatre, now a major branch of the theatre industry and almost the only proving ground for the aspiring actor, director or designer, served as the next stepping stone. That same summer Chaney assisted with scenery and with direction at the Bela Blau-Val Rosen theatre in Magnolia, Massachusetts. Then came more community theatre work, this time for the Utica Little Theatre, Utica, New York. Chaney's summer theatre designs brought him a commission from the American Opera Company to design scenery for the operas *Faust* and *Pagliacci*. In 1933 he helped Robert Cutler turn an old barn (traditional cradle of the summer theatre) into the Suffern Playhouse, and then designed settings for a season of Broadway revivals there. The next year he worked for Lawrence Langner at the Westport Summer Theatre. Among the plays he designed that summer was *The Bride of Torozko*, which was being tried out on the summer trade. It went to Broadway in the fall, and Chaney's settings with it, but it failed with discouraging speed. Then came 1935, *The Old Maid*, and the end of the hard road.

Not only did interesting assignments come Chaney's way thereafter, but in 1937 his talent won recognition from the Guggenheim Foundation which awarded him a fellowship for work and study abroad. This enabled Chaney to improve his painting technique in André Lhote's studio in Paris, and to travel through Europe studying at first hand the theatre in many countries. While abroad he designed and directed Sheridan's *The Rivals* at London's famous Old Vic, and also designed *Faust* for the Convent Garden Opera.

Broadway has a strong tendency to "type" its young actors, employing them only in the type of part in which they scored their initial success. It has tended to do the same sort of thing with this young designer. Because his first success was scored with *The Old Maid*, he has been employed more often on plays whose action takes place in the past or on revivals of old plays rather than on new plays with modern settings. Though this "typing" has perhaps prevented Chaney from being quite so busy as some of his competitors, it has probably not been an entirely unmixed evil. His has been a greater proportion of interesting assignments and consequently fewer routine jobs than usually fall to the lot of a Broadway designer. He has little interest in the simple realistic setting, which is all that most Broadway plays require, and enjoys much more the task of recreating a sense of the past as he has done for *The Old Maid*, for *Parnell*, and for *Wuthering*

Heights. For a real renaissance in our theatre, he says, "we must return to the theatre world of Shakespeare and Moliere, and create a theatre that is imaginative and an interpretation of life expressed in purely theatrical terms."

When faced with the problem of setting a play whose action lies in the past, Chaney is not concerned with achieving an accurate reproduction of the necessary interior or exterior, such as one might find reconstructed in a museum. His settings for *Life With Father* is an excellent example. Clarence Day's recollections of his boyhood in New York in the Nineties are happy ones. The eccentricities of Father and Mother are comic, and the whole tone of the play made from this material is essentially gay. If Chaney had reproduced the kind of room in which the Days actually lived, it would have been heavy and dark, entirely inappropriate to the play. Instead he designed a room, which, though it suggested the historical period, was colorful and gay, a room "not as it was but as they remembered it."

"Plays of poetic insight" as Simonson calls them, inspire most designers to their best work, and Chaney has been fortunate that two Shakespearian assignments have already come his way. His settings for *Hamlet* perhaps gives as good a measure as any of his importance in American stage design. I suppose that just as every actor wants sometime to play the melancholy Prince every designer who is worth

his salt longs to design settings for that great play. Within two years, 1936 to 1938, three great actors and three designers realized that ambition on Broadway. John Gielgud was first away in settings by Joe Mielziner. Leslie Howard followed quickly with settings and costumes by Stewart Chaney, and not long after came Maurice Evans with settings by the English designer, David Ffolkes. Needless to say, comparisons were drawn all along the line, and although Leslie Howard's performance was badly received in comparison, particularly with Gielgud's with whom he was in direct competition, Chaney's settings were highly praised. Indeed, Edward Reed, writing in the *Magazine of Art*, did not hesitate to say that they were the most thoughtful and the most workable of the three. The horizontal lines of the steps and levels opposed to the vertical masses of the walls and heavy arches created a mood of grim strength and a sense of the clash of powerful forces. Though the main framework was permanent, it allowed for unit changes in the steps, columns, and arches, which provided adequate variation for the many scenes without holding up with long scene waits the flow of action so essential to Shakespeare.

Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia initiated the style of setting Shakespeare, Moliere, and modern non-realistic plays architecturally, which has dominated our stage for a quarter of a century. Chaney's settings for *Hamlet* are in this style. But there are definite signs of revolt against it, and one sign is Chaney's own interest in reviving painted scenery. He had his first real opportunity in London at the Old Vic where for his production of *The Rivals* he used painted wings and backdrops, and tilted the stage floor to emphasize the painted perspective of the settings and to accent the acting space.

Last year the Helen Hayes-Maurice Evans *Twelfth Night* production conceived in Restoration terms gave Chaney a second opportunity of which he made the most. Restoration theatres with their painted perspectives, ornate prosceniums, and irrelevant chandeliers inspired his designs. Rosamond Gilder in *Theatre Arts Monthly* wrote: "Mr. Chaney's settings . . . are happily in the spirit of playful fantasy. His false proscenium, decked with billowing painted curtains, can be set in the twinkling of an eye. With backdrops painted in perspective, a set piece or two, the scene changes from Orsino's palace to Olivia's garden, from the buttery to the street or to my lady's chamber."

Painted scenery is cheaper and far more mobile than scenery built in three dimensions. Though it is yet too soon to say, it is quite possible that Stewart Chaney is a pioneer in a new movement in scenic art, a movement which will find new uses for the old wing and backdrop and new meanings for our theatre in the long discarded painted perspective scene.

National Thespian Drama Tournament Awards

SEASON OF 1942

In accordance with its policy of promoting higher standards in the choice of plays and in the techniques of acting and play production in the secondary schools, the National Thespian Dramatic Honor Society For High Schools announces the following awards for the 1942 tournament season:

Certificates of Excellence. Attractive Certificates of Excellence in Dramatics will be awarded to schools receiving first-place honors or Superior Rating in the finals of state-wide or inter-state tournaments. Certificates will also be awarded to schools receiving similar honors in district and regional tournaments when such events are not part of a state-wide tournament.

Complimentary Subscriptions. A one-year complimentary subscription for THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN, beginning with the October, 1942, issue, will also be awarded to schools receiving first-place honors or Superior Rating in the finals of state-wide or inter-state tournaments. (Winners of district and regional tournaments are not included.)

Directory of Drama Festivals and Contests. Schools receiving first-place honors or Superior Rating in the finals of state-wide or inter-state tournaments will also be awarded a copy of the 1941 *Directory of Drama Festivals and Contests*. This *Directory* will also be awarded to schools receiving similar honors in district and regional tournaments when such events are not part of a state-wide tournament.

Dramatic Brazil*

by WILLIS KNAPP JONES

Department of Romanic Languages, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

A COMPLETE picture of the development of drama among our Southern Neighbors would be a vast panorama. Besides the nations considered in the first five articles of this series, it would include dramatic activity among Caribbean nations. In Costa Rica, for instance, it would consider the half dozen interesting plays of José-Fabián Garnier.

In Cuba it would review the people's theatre established by Cuba's Minister of Education, Dr. Chacón y Calvo, and directed by Rafael Marquina, creator of a similar project in Spain. A company of ten travels to its public in a truck and trailer complete with portable stage. In 1941 the Cuban traveling theatre paused to present national and patriotic plays in forty towns on the island.

From farther south, the picture would have to include Venezuela's children's theatres and a government-sponsored playhouse for the workers that has already presented nearly a hundred fifty plays at the Teatro Bolívar de Catia, before more than 200,000 spectators. One unique feature of this theatre is a loud speaker to broadcast comments on the significance of certain speeches and to underline the lessons to be drawn.

Farther south, Ecuador, that beehive of novelists, would be represented by Jorge Icaza's seven plays and by *Lázaro* in which Demetrio Aguilar Malta demonstrates in drama the hopelessness of expecting an intellectual renaissance in a country where professors get a monthly salary of \$20 in our money. Recently, this internationally-known novelist has written dramas about the Galápagos Islands and about Manueleta Sáenz, sweetheart of the Liberator Bolívar.

Ecuador, too, is the home of Avellán Ferres, one of the few South Americans outside Argentina to have chosen the career of dramatist. He does not merely sandwich a play between crops of novels or poetry. His half dozen published dramas successfully staged in Quito and Guayaquil attack Ecuador's social problems.

Finally, at least one quick glance would have to be devoted to the bilingual theatre of Paraguay, shut away in the heart of the continent, where drama in Spanish is developing alongside plays on native themes in Guaraní, the language spoken by all of Paraguay's Indians, and by many of its whites.

Little need be said of the few feeble attempts at play production among Hispanic American schools, since practically no college has dormitories or campus life, and students who attend classes all day and live at home have little time or interest in class plays.

Sporadic attempts at Experimental and Little Theatres have been made, but they, too, are in the preliminary stages.

More might be written about the movies, since Argentina, Brazil and Mexico have made progress in this field, and occasional national films also appear from Chile. In comparison with Hollywood products, however, most of them are crude and jumpy.

Therefore, since this is the final article in this series, all these less-developed phases of national drama must be slighted in order to concentrate on a country which, if for nothing but its size, would compel consideration.

Brazil in size and in population makes up just about half of South America. Pope Alexander VII and the signers of the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 made a more equitable division of the New World than they knew, in drawing a north-south line 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, and giving Portugal all land to the east, and Spain all land to the west of it.

Students must not forget that this United States of Brazil, about as large as continental United States, speaks Portuguese, not Spanish, and that its customs and traditions spring from Portugal rather than from Spain. Its history, too, has been very different from that of the other Latin colonies of America. While Spain's colonists were fighting their mother country for independence, Brazil's method was a quiet assimilation of its homeland, and for a while, the Portuguese king lived in America, and Portugal was the colony.

When Brazil decided to become independent, it merely announced its desires to its European homeland and set up its own Empire. For seventy-five years, two of the five white Emperors who lived and ruled in America, gave South America its truest democracy. Then eventually, when the Brazilians got tired of an Emperor, they put the regal old Don Pedro on a boat, shipped him back to Europe, and became a republic.

Unfortunately it is not as easy to create a national theatre as to create a new government. Brazil's theatre has had a varied history.

Though Mello Moraes Filho mentions religious plays in the São Vicente Theatre in 1565, the founder of the Brazilian stage was the Jesuit Padre, José de Anchieta (1530-97). This pioneer in colonization believed in the power of drama for spread-

ing Christian dogma, so that probably the first play of Brazil whose name we know, *Pregação universal e o misterio de Jesus* (*Universal Sermon or the Mystery of Jesus*), performed in Niteroi, just north of Rio, was written by him.

First played in 1566 or 1567, it was repeated in Rio in 1584, with elaborate mounting, including red damask curtains, a trap door where the evil spirits could appear and disappear, and an artificial river at which St. Lawrence, Sebastian, and the others could defeat the Roman Nero.

Early Brazilian plays, like similar drama elsewhere on the continent, ran to moralities, such as the spectacle *O rico avarento e o lázaro pobre* (*The Avaricious Rich Man and the Poor Beggar*) played in Recife in 1575 to persuade the rich Pernambucans to be more charitable. And Recife was evidently a theatrical center, for it was the scene of Brazil's first non-religious comedy, in 1641, and of a comedy before the new governor, in 1711. The name of one of its citizens, Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho, ranks high among early dramatists.

Manuel Botelho de Oliveira, born in San Salvador (Baia) in 1636, was the first non-religious dramatist known by name, the one to introduce the Spanish drama into the country, and the first Brazilian to have his plays published. It is fitting, therefore, that the Baians should inaugurate their first theatre, built in 1733, with one of his plays.

Greatest among colonial dramatists was Antonio José da Silva (1705-39), but since, unfortunately for him, he was taken to Lisbon at the age of eight, and since none of his eight plays relates to Brazil, he can hardly be considered Brazilian. He would have been better off in his homeland, since the Inquisition got interested in that Jewish blood of his which turned him to music and satire as in the case of Offenbach. He was condemned and burned at an *auto de fe*, in Lisbon, October 19, 1739, leaving such plays as *Vida do grande Don Quijote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Panza*, and *As guerras do Alecrim e da Mangerona* (*Wars of Rosemary and Marjoram*), the latter considered the greatest Portuguese comedy of the 18th century. It deals with an old miser, Lanserote, his two nieces Cloris and Nize, and a nephew Tiburcio, a fool in spite of his degree in law.

As in most other South American countries, Brazilian plays were first performed in public squares and in private houses. In 1767, Padre Ventura sponsored the building of the Casa da Opera in Rio. In the three years that it operated before catching fire, several plays by Antonio José were given and the first of Brazil's theatrical periods began.

Though in Vila Rica, Claudio Manuel da Costa wrote classical plays and Alva-

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*With acknowledgement to Dr. Augusto Meyer, Brazil's Minister of Education, to Lafayette Silvz, author of *Historia do Teatro Brasileiro*, to other playwrights and critics, and to Prof. da Cruz of Miami for help and interest.



**Municipal
Theatre,**

**Rio de Janeiro,
Brazil.**

(Photo
courtesy of
Pan American
Union,
Washington,
D. C.)

renga Peixoto wrote a drama in verse, *Enéas na Lácio*, and translated Metastasio's *Merope*, it can be said in general that the 18th century writers had more interest in music and operas than in drama.

Drama entered the daily life of Brazil in the 19th century. In 1807, the occupation of Portugal by Napoleon sent the regent of that country, with perhaps 15,000 nobles, soldiers, and servants, fleeing to Brazil. Their arrival at Rio brought about the establishment of a bank, a printing press, a library, and, in 1810, a "teatro decente," suited for the capital of a great nation. It was named Royal Theatre of St. John, after the name of the Regent, and opened on Columbus Day, 1813.

For eleven years, it provided dramas, some by European actors, some by the company of the famous Argentine Casacuberta. But its existence ended when it caught fire during a celebration of the new charter of the freed nation, in 1824.

By then, Brazil had a new Emperor, Pedro. He arranged a huge national lottery to pay for rebuilding the theatre, and in his honor, it was renamed Royal Theatre of St. Peter.

Like his father, Emperor Pedro I preferred Europe, and so when the army revolted, in 1831, he abdicated in favor of his five year old son, Pedro, and returned to Portugal.

Under the new Pedro, crowned Emperor in 1840, Brazil continued to progress intellectually. French influence turned the thoughts of the nation's literary men toward the advances made in Europe and so that same Romanticism that started a national drama in Mexico and Chile produced what is celebrated as Brazil's first national play, *Antonio José*, by Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães.

As Brazil's representative at Rome, Gon-

çalves de Magalhães knew of Romanticism. He had seen it in the theatres of France and Belgium, and when he came back to Brazil, in his baggage was *Antonio José or the Poet and the Inquisition*, the tragic story of the Jew da Silva already mentioned. It was performed in Rio in 1838, the same year that saw the performance of the first national comedy, the farcical *O juiz de paz na roça* (*The Rural Justice of the Peace*), by Luiz Carlos Martins Penna, one of twenty-seven original plays by this portrayer of customs.

1838, then, marks the beginning of Brazilian national drama, whose centennial was celebrated in 1938.

Pedro II was genuinely interested in the development of culture in his Empire. He determined to be the Maecenas of all artistic efforts. One of his first acts upon coming to the throne, in 1840, was to refurbish the national theatre and encourage a society for the patrons of drama; another was to arrange for four lotteries a year for six years, to provide funds to maintain the theatre and a dramatic school for training actors.

Pedro also helped promising musicians. One, whom he sent to Italy to study, was Antonio Carlos Gomes, who wrote the only Brazilian opera that most people have heard about: *O Guarani*, set in Sixteenth Century Rio and having to do with the love of a Guarani Indian chief, Pery, and the daughter of the Portuguese leader. Caruso sang it when he first visited Rio in 1903, but today only its overtures, full of native melodies of the Indians, and a first act duet are very much played.

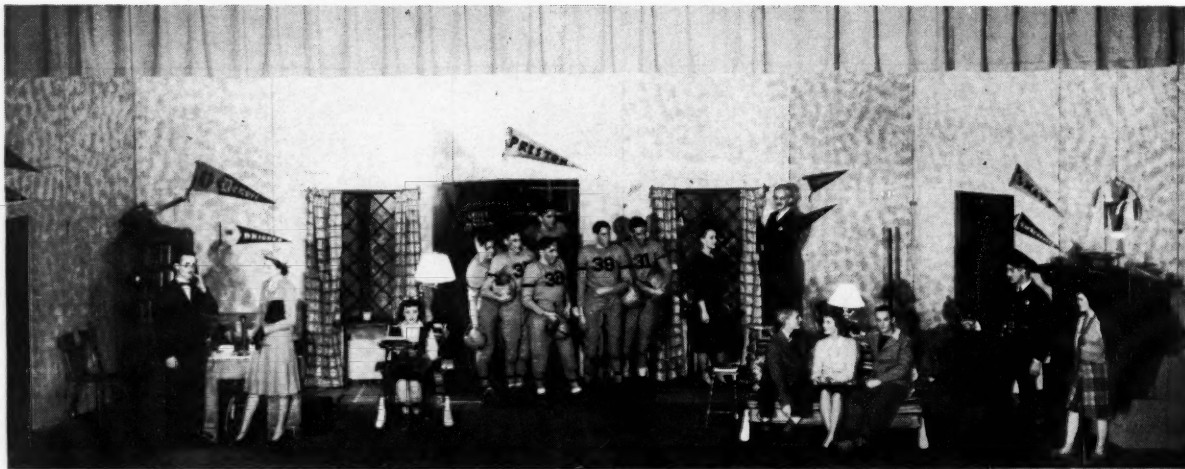
In order to discover what was wrong with the theatre, the Emperor founded a Royal Academy of Music and National Drama, and gave it the duty of seeing what could be done to create great drama.

Several years later, it reported that Brazil lacked two essentials: good theatres and good drama schools. For that reason, possible playwrights were turned to other fields.

They had plenty of examples of writers who began with plays and then continued as novelists or poets. Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis (1839-1908), published *Theatro* in 1863, then the next year turned out another play, *Quase ministro* (*Almost a Minister*), but with neither actors nor theatre available, he turned to short stories, poems, and novels.

Only a few writers persisted. One was França Junior (1861-89) who announced his intention of educating the tastes of the Brazilian public poisoned by Romanticist dramatists, and who criticized the society of his time in a dozen comedies, among them *As doutoras* (*The Female Doctors*) and *Tres candidatos* (*Three Candidates*). So popular was he, and so fertile in composition, that in one year, 1882, five of his plays saw production.

In 1888 the Empire of Brazil came to an end. The tall, white-bearded Emperor, who had been his country's best traveling salesman, who had visited the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876 and by showing interest in Alexander Graham Bell's telephone had started that inventor on the road to success, was getting along in years. He had ruled his country for nearly fifty years. When his country objected to his daughter's act of freeing Brazil's few remaining slaves, while Pedro was in Europe, the Emperor declared Brazil independent, boarded a ship and sailed off to Paris, leaving behind him such a chaos, so many petty politicians quarrelling for supremacy, that the native theatre was forgotten. The development of drama was left in the hands of a few foreign companies from



Cast and stage set for *Ever Since Eve* as given by Miss Geraldine Green at the Franklin School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Thespian Troupe No. 468.

Europe that could still entice an audience into the half dozen theatres of the new republic.

As a sort of revenge, however, some of the Brazilian dramatists invented a new form of entertainment, the parody. They would wait until a foreign play became popular, then write a sketch that poked fun at it, as the Mexican comic Cantinflas made the movie, *Neither Blood nor Sand*, as a parody on the well-known *Blood and Sand*.

When *La fille de Madame Angot* was playing to capacity houses, Artur Azevedo (1855-1908) offered *A filha de Maria Angu*. The French Clairette became the Brazilian Clarinha. Ange Pitou was rechristened Angelo Bitú. Pomponnet became Barnabá, and the plot and action of the original French play was tensed and speeded until it became laughable. This French play must have been either easy to burlesque or very popular since two other parodies on it appeared on Brazilian stages.

Another type of entertainment, the musical Revue, frequently contained units that survived after the complete show was forgotten. This is true of another one-act play, also by Azevedo, from the revue *O tribofe* (*The "Blow-hard"*) of 1892. The sketch, *A capital Federal* (Rio), started on an independent career that not only saw it performed many times in Brazil, but also took it to the theatres of Portugal. It concerns a Sabará family composed of Euzebio the father, his wife Fortuna, their children Quinota and Juquinha, who went with the servant Benvinda to the Federal Capital, the home of Gouveia who had promised to marry Quinota. Gouveia had taken up Lola, but she is so taken by the father that she would gladly send her younger admirer back to his old sweetheart if Euzebio will stay and entertain her. The mulatto servant is also caught up by the wild night life of Rio, but eventually the family goes back to Sabará, with the girls safely married off.

Even ridicule could not keep the foreign companies away. In 1908 a German Light Opera company introduced *Dollar Princess* and *Merry Widow* to the Cariocas of Rio.

The same year, on January 13, the Teatro Municipio opened. Apparently the citizens of Rio were pessimistic about the number of people who would attend performances because, though they spent \$12,000,000 on their national theatre, it provided seats for only 1,700.

In an attempt to bolster up Brazil's drama, the government made an unusual contract with the impresario who was to manage the Municipal Theatre in 1909. The man had to promise to maintain a national company and to perform plays recommended by the Brazilian Academy of Letters, with at least five plays a year performed from manuscript. But after a two years' trial, he reported the impossibility of carrying out these terms.

A dramatic school was established under the direction of the dramatist Coelho Netto. At his suggestion, Congress advanced seventy contos (\$420) to subsidize the national drama, to offer prizes, and to underwrite producers. But he found that a nation cannot buy great plays and that seventy contos do not go very far. The Apolo Theatre that year spent 100 contos mounting just one play, and the Fenix had 700 contos tied up in costumes alone.

Producers of plays in Brazil have other expenses not known in this country. There is a tax of 1\$200 (7c) on every billboard advertisement tacked up, and many shows need 5,000 or more posters to announce them. Also every play has to be submitted

to the national censor, for which a charge of 1\$200 a page is made.

Another handicap is the small number of people who attend plays. Less than two per cent. of Rio's population go to the theatre, one manager complained, and added that he gets a daily request from a hundred or more for complimentary tickets. In São Paulo, one of Brazil's cultural centers, with a population of more than a million, few plays can keep the boards for a week's run.

However the theatre is not dead. One recent and popular play is *O contratador de diamantes* (*Diamond Dealer*) by Afonso Arinos. A volume called *Teatro* appeared in 1937 by the most iconoclastic dramatist of Brazil, Oswald de Andrade, containing *O homem e o cavalo* (*Man and Horse*) suppressed by Rio's police. Both these men give promise of a new Brazilian literature in the process of formation. A recent drama published by Cláudio de Souza lists thirty other published plays by him. And finally, the prize offered by the Brazilian Academy of Letters was bestowed in 1939 upon the play *O gosto da vida* (*Pleasure of Life*), by a woman, Maria Jacinta Trovão de Campos.

When all these writers, women as well as men, are interested in producing drama, and the government is back of them, drama in Brazil is certainly not dead. But here, as in the other Ibero-American countries whose dramas we have been considering this year, we can see that the same two handicaps mentioned by the Royal Academy back in 1862 prevent much world-shaking dramatic production. Our Southern Neighbors are poor and theatres cost money. Most poets or novelists or story writers can reach the public with their productions, even in Latin America, but only a few lucky or favored dramatists can see their plays on the stage. So we cannot be too scornful of what they have achieved. If our Hemisphere Solidarity and Inter-Cultural Relations succeed in raising the standard of living in Latin America, we can have every reason to hope that from the seeds of drama already sown a flourishing plant will grow.

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The Theatre of Rome

by FRED C. BLANCHARD

Director of Dramatics, Woodrow Wilson Junior College, Chicago, Ill.

"WHEN in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Shall we see, for a few minutes, just what you, as a theatre-minded person, would have done in ancient Rome if you followed the above maxim? Suppose you could suddenly be transported back to Rome by some sort of Superman magic, back perhaps to a year in the early part of the Fourth Century. You would find, not a serious and sombre city dedicated to order, discipline, civil and military organization, but a gay and pleasure-loving one seeking satisfaction in all sorts of public entertainment. You could go to some kind of spectacle on every other day in the year. You would be able to witness Greek tragedies and comedies, translated and adapted for Roman audiences. You could see original plays on Roman subjects. One day you might witness a serious pantomime, another day a coarse and satirical *mimus*, or farce. You would probably spend much time in the huge circuses, fascinated by athletic contests, chariot races, gladiatorial combats, naval battles, even mortal struggles between Christian slaves and wild beasts. Theatre, not a noble and uplifting theatre it is true, you would find to be a dominating part of the life of Rome.

This, of course, is not a picture of the early Rome of stern and simple virtues, but of the later Empire, already decadent, rich and soft with the spoils of conquest, soon to be an easy prey for the conquering hordes from the North. Theatre had passed through many phases from the first days of the Republic to the last days of the Western Empire. But even if you had only your imaginary visit to Fourth Century Rome as evidence, you could come to some valid general conclusions. By nature, you could see, the Romans ex-

celled in impersonative arts. Their tastes inclined toward amusement, farce, display, spectacle. They apparently shared the 20th Century notion that "biggest" is synonymous with "best." On the literary side, they always excelled in comedy and farce. They were not, however, very creative in drama, and made no important original contribution to the literature of the theatre.

You may remember that the first article in this series told how the Greek drama developed gradually and spontaneously out of religious celebrations. It was entirely original and indigenous, owing little or nothing to outside influences, its roots deep in the traditional past of Greece. Although certain native influences helped to shape the Roman drama, its main sources were in Greek tragedy and comedy, particularly the New Comedy of Menander and his colleagues. There was a Greek and Roman drama. In literature and the arts, the Romans gained inspiration and instruction from the Greeks. At first, Greek drama was taken over almost in its entirety. The tragedies and comedies of Athens began to be known and performed by the Romans in the Third Century B. C., when the power of Greece was declining and that of Rome rising. We must not forget that Greek culture spread over most of the Mediterranean world, and that when the Romans went their conquering way, they were subject to the influence of that culture. As the Romans came to dominate "Mare Nostrum," they accepted, used and modified the existent Greek drama, its methods of production, and its theatre buildings.

Roman drama was never primarily religious. Tragedy went straight back to Athens as its source, but it never shared the fundamental Greek spirit of worshipful

celebration. Comedy—strangely enough for a supposedly serious people—seemed to be the special forte of the Roman genius. Roman comedy is believed to have developed from a number of sources, but even here the New Comedy of Greece was the most important. Stories and characters were taken directly from the Greek, and the greatest Roman playwrights prided themselves on their faithful adaptation. Another origin is to be found in the Dorian farces of Syracuse. You may recall that these farces, the *phylakes*, had much to do with the development of Athenian comedy. The *phylakes*, amusingly performed and simply written, no doubt spread directly into neighboring Italy as they did to Greece. Etruria, near Rome, developed a form of comic drama somewhat like that of early Athens, with the features of song, dance and improvised humorous dialogue. The so-called Fescennine Verses and the *saturnae*, which originated in Etruria and were later performed in Rome, constituted a primitive but truly native theatre type.

Another simple sort of comedy was performed by the Oscans, especially in Atella. These Atellan farces, employing grotesque costumes and dealing with humorous incidents of ordinary life, survived for many centuries. Some of their typical characters, such as the glutton, the fool and the stupid old man, were to be seen again in the *Commedia dell'Arte*. (But that is another and a fascinating story.) Despite the likely influence of these rustic celebrations, though, Roman drama derived principally from the Greek.

The Roman theatre may have been developed, in small measure, from the simple platform stages used in the native farces. But, as the drama itself was based on the Greek, the structures which housed Roman



Cast for the production of *Night of January 16* at the Leetsdale, Pa., High School. Thespian Troupe No. 421. Directed by Miss Ethel Virginia Peaslee (inset).

plays had their main origin in the Greek theatres. By the time the Romans came to control the known world, there were permanent Greek theatre buildings in many countries. These the Romans altered and used for their own productions. Indeed, in certain theatres such as those at Corinth and Athens, archaeologists have trouble in deciding which portions were built by the Greeks and which by the Romans. When the Romans raised their own structures, the Greek theatres were ready-made models. Certain important changes, however, were made. The side entrances between the auditorium and stage building were closed, so that actors and audience were in a single building. Although players and spectators were thus joined, they were separated in other ways—by the use of a raised platform stage and a front curtain. This front curtain was operated from a slot below the stage level rather than from above it.

As the chorus was no longer a principal feature of production, the dancing space, or *orchestra*, was made into a semi-circle rather than a complete circle and its size was reduced. The space thus gained was used for important spectators. Unlike the Greek theatres, which were built on hill-sides, Roman theatres were built up from the level ground like a modern structure. Much attention was therefore given to the appearance of the outside of the building. The stages and perhaps the auditoriums were sometimes roofed with cloth or wood. You can see that in many ways—a single structure, raised stage, orchestra seats, front curtain—the Roman theatre building began to resemble the modern. The raised stage was used for all action. It had an elaborate permanent architectural background, composed of three high stories of columns above one another and ornamented with many objects of sculpture. There were regularly three doors in this background for the actors' entrances and exits. It is probable that little movable scenery was used.

Permanent theatre buildings were not erected by the Romans until the First Century B. C., but their main features soon became fairly well standardized. Vitruvius, who lived at the beginning of the Christian era, wrote a book on architecture which described Roman theatre construction in detail. Among the most famous theatres standing today are the Theatre of Marcellus in Rome, one in Orange in France, another at Aspendos in Asia Minor. The two theatres at Pompeii have been seen by many American travelers. The small theatre at Fiesole, near Florence, which I once visited, is not as well known as some others, but it is an excellent example of the type of building described by Vitruvius. The great circuses for public entertainment, somewhat like modern football bowls evidenced the Roman engineering skill. The Circus Maximus and the Colosseum in Rome are typical of these tremendous structures; the latter is supposed to have accommodated

about one hundred thousand spectators.

In addition to these, there were many temporary theatres, usually built by rich men for public displays. One, which cost a million dollars, was said to have seated eighty thousand persons. Another is said to have been composed of two separate theatres which could be swung around and joined together, thus making one single great stadium. Others were flooded and used for staging of realistic naval battles. Some of these reports are hard to believe, but when we think of the engineering genius of the Romans, as shown by roads, bridges and aqueducts, they must not be dismissed as impossible.

You will recall that Athenian plays were given at great festivals; this was also true in Rome, where these festivals were called *ludi*. There were four principal ones each year, but many others were regularly scheduled, in addition to frequent celebrations of special events. Theatrical performances were a part of these festivals, and were paid for by a wealthy patron as the *editor*. Comedies and tragedies were acted at one of the festivals as early as 240 B. C. Fifty years later they were given on 49 days of the year. By the Fourth Century A.D., 175 days a year were given over to some form of public entertainment, 101 of them to dramatic performances. At first, the state would have nothing to do with theatre, but by 194 B. C., the Senate attended a performance as an official act. In the late years of the Empire, the government provided free amusement for the restless Roman public.

Methods of production and acting were largely borrowed from the Greeks. Make-up paint and wigs were used at first, but masks came into general use about 100 B. C. Acting had many of the elements of the Greek style. Music, dancing, singing and pantomime were still necessary accomplishments for the actor. In some forms of acting, one performer recited the lines while another went through suitable movements. Definite sets of gestures were used for each type of character. The symbolism of masks and costumes also became standardized.

Histrion is the Latin word for actor, easily recognizable in our term "histrionic." The actor in Rome was seldom honored as in Greece. Actors were usually slaves without civil rights. At first, the actors were hired by dramatic poets, but soon a professional class appeared. These pro-

fessionals were contracted for by managers of theatrical performances. In serious plays, women were not allowed, but they were permitted and featured in farces. A few actors managed to attain fame and distinction despite their handicaps. Clodius Aesopus was the most famous actor of tragedy, Q. Roscius Gallus of comedy. Both of these men lived in the First Century B. C. Roscius' fame has not yet entirely disappeared; even today a talented actor is sometimes referred to as a "Second Roscius."

The names and reputations of many Roman playwrights have come down to us; there is space here to mention but a few of them. Livius Andronicus (3rd Cent. B.C.) translated Greek tragedies and comedies. Naevius (3rd Cent. B. C.) borrowed from Euripides, but wrote some plays on Roman subjects. Ennius (239-169 B.C.) based many of his plays on the Iliad and Euripides. Plautus (254-184 B.C.), Terence (185-159 B.C.) and Seneca (4 B.C.-65 A.D.) were the really great figures in Roman dramatic literature. Plautus adapted Greek New Comedies, but they became truly Roman under his treatment. Terence wrote for a limited audience of sophisticates; his plays were faithful imitations of Greek comedies. Seneca wrote tragic dramas on Greek themes, although it was his intention to put them into terms understandable to the Romans. His plays were written to be read rather than acted, and were probably never performed in his own lifetime. With Seneca, the literary history of Roman drama really came to a close. Our next article will be about these men and their works.

In comedy—and comedy of manners in particular—the Romans found their happiest mode of dramatic expression. But about tragedy, farce, pantomime, spectacle—all these the Romans experienced in their theatres. We would have a higher opinion of Roman drama if it had ended with Plautus, Terence and Seneca. But it continued after Seneca's time for several centuries, and as life in the imperial capital became more indolent and luxurious, the drama became more vicious and licentious. The theatre was attacked by old Romans and new Christians alike, but the public continued to demand satisfaction of its desire for sensational entertainment. At last, with Rome under the rule of the Goths and Lombards, the theatre was completely suppressed. Theatre, degraded and dishonored, was dead, not to rise again for a thousand years.

At the Renaissance of drama, aided once again by religious ritual, the workings of the Roman theatre were rediscovered. The Roman plays were freely adapted into modern languages, Roman clowns again danced and sang upon the boards, Roman playwrights handed on to modern drama the glories of the Grecian theatre. The theatre of Shakespeare, the theatre of Moliere, our theatre today owe no small debt to the drama which once pleased audiences in the City of the Seven Hills.

Your Radio Scripts

We shall be interested in receiving radio scripts (fifteen-minute programs) prepared by you and/or your students on the subject of national defense and the war effort. The best scripts will be made available to all Troupes next fall. We are interested only in original scripts which have already been performed over a radio station. Manuscripts must be neatly typed. An effort will be made to find a publisher for those scripts considered outstanding. Mail to the National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Casting Problems

An Open Letter About Why Directors Get Gray

by BLANDFORD JENNINGS

Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Clayton, Missouri, High School

This letter is directed to the girls of this particular author's organization, The Dramatic Guild of Clayton High School. It is not addressed to the boys for reasons which will appear in the letter. But the change of the name of the organization and of the director would make it applicable to almost any other school.

DEAR Colleague:

"He just doesn't like me."
"I don't understand what he sees in her."
"I didn't make the cast—all the Director's favorites were out against me."
"You don't have a chance around here unless you have a drag."

These are samples of the kind of comments that invariably get back to the Director after a show is cast. Wasn't it Lincoln who once sadly remarked that, when you appointed somebody to a job for which there were several candidates, you made ten enemies and one ingrate? It's fun to be a Director—fun enough to make up for much of the hard work, long hours and wearing responsibility; but casting certainly takes the joy out of life!

And the worst of it is, there isn't any way to make it easier. Look at the Dramatic Guild at our school. Pupils enter the school as sophomores. Suppose they join the Guild immediately, as many of them do. Then there will be four three-act plays in which they may take part during their career in the school—three major productions and a senior play.

These four plays will, on the average, contain a total of about 30 parts for boys and about 25 for girls. We needn't worry about the boys, because the Guild rarely has as many as 30 boys who want to act; they practically every boy who wants a chance will get it.

But the Guild enrolls upwards of 60 girls. Problem: When you divide 25 by 60, what's the answer? In case your arithmetic is rusty, I'll tell you: it's a dozen, more gray hairs for the Director—and a lot of remarks like those above. It doesn't make it any easier when you realize that some of the girls have such outstanding ability that it is almost impossible, for the sake of the show, not to cast them in at least two shows, while others because of their height, weight, voice, or coloring, simply cannot be cast in most of the plays available for school use. It all boils down to the proposition, that inevitably, two girls out of three are going to be disappointed by not having a single part in a three-act play. And many of them will be intelligent, able, worthy girls who could probably do the parts as well as those who actually do get the call.

But perhaps you would be a little more charitable if you were better acquainted with some of the numerous questions those answers the Director has to harmonize somehow before he can arrive at a decision. Ask yourself these questions and

add up the answers. Maybe then you'll know why you haven't been cast for all the parts you wanted.

1. *How do you stand in your school work?* Nobody who constantly dwells in that twilight land on the narrow edge of failure can possibly spend six hours a week in rehearsal and as much again in line study without falling over the edge. So the records in the office are prayerfully studied before the final decision is reached.

2. *Have you plenty of energy; is your health such that you are rarely absent from school?* The Director can't afford to have any member of the cast miss many rehearsals, nor does he want to have to make a frenzied effort to find a substitute at about the time of dress rehearsal.

3. *Are you dependable?* Do your teachers report that you are never tardy, that your work is always done on time, that you keep your promises? Next to acting ability (or maybe before it), the Director wants this quality in an actor.

4. *Are you generally able?* A good mind may not be necessary to an actress, but it certainly helps a lot!

5. *Are you physically suited to the part?* If you are being considered for an ingenue (sweet young thing, to you)! are you attractive? Will you look young and fresh in stage make-up? Are you the right height for the boy who will play the juvenile (nice young fellow)? If you are being thought of for a more grown-up part, is your voice sufficiently mature-sounding? Can any amount of make-up make you look adult? Are you tall enough? If you are trying out for character part (old lady or eccentric), will you make up well? Do

you have the imagination to create the character? Is your voice right? Can you handle dialect, if that is involved?

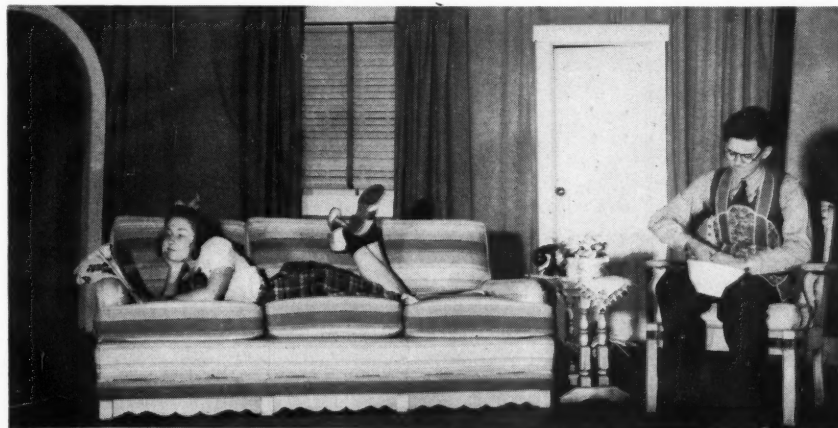
6. *Does the fact that you have patiently worked on various staffs and committees entitle you to special consideration?* The Director can't help feeling a special cordiality for girls who have painted scenery or labored on props, while missing out on one try-out after another. If this be favoritism, make the most of it!

7. *Has your previous handling of a small part shown you to have such outstanding ability that it would be a great injustice both to you and to our audiences not to give you a chance to show what you can do in a difficult part that might be a failure in the hands of an inexperienced player?* This consideration accounts for nearly all of the instances in which a girl is cast in more than one play.

8. *Will this experience be of special value to you as a person?* Perhaps you have definitely decided to make the stage a career. Maybe you particularly need and deserve the social recognition that comes to a successful actress. Possibly the training in co-operation and selflessness that she will get in a play will help you to become the fine person you have the capacity for being.

9. *And last, and almost least; will you contribute to making this the strongest cast available for this show?* If we were running a professional, commercial theatre, this would of course be number 1 instead of number 9—and there probably wouldn't be any number 2. But in this high school we have never had the strongest cast we could have had for any show. Because, in order to assemble such a cast, we should have had to ignore some of the other eight questions.

So if you are among those who have felt bitter about not having been given the parts you have sought, will you take this letter as an explanation and an apology from the Director, and find consolation in the knowledge that without your competition at try-outs and your indispensable aid backstage, our Guild could not possibly be as successful as it is?



Scene from *China Boy*, a production of Thespian Troupe No. 177 at the Orlando, Florida, Senior High School. Miss Mildred E. Murphy, director.



Duke Lambert and Death discuss the latter's visit to earth. From the Webster Groves, Mo., High School production of *Death Takes a Holiday*. Miss Shirley Pratt, director. Thespian Troupe No. 191.

Acting in the Classroom

by KATHERINE A. OMMANNEY

Director of Dramatics, North High School, Denver, Colorado

ACTING a part in a play has been the goal of the semester's work toward which all the training has been directed, and we should try to enter into the joys of anticipation which most of our students feel as they approach production of a series of one-act plays. Of course, acting and play production cannot be separated, but I have found it more satisfactory to stress the acting in the first semester, touching upon all that is possible for inexperienced young people to grasp about production, and then take up the art of play production as a vital phase of the second semester's classwork.

Our approach to the acting of the one-act plays is most important. We all know personally that, to a natural actor, playing a part to our own and other people's satisfaction is a joy comparable to few in the creative field; it is also our greatest

opportunity for developing the personality of our students. We should, therefore, try to build up a psychological and physical situation in which they can get the full value of the experience. Our classrooms should have some sort of practical stage made of screens or drapes equipped with simple lighting apparatus and the essential pieces of furniture. The room itself should at least approximate a completely darkened auditorium in order that a theatrical atmosphere can be set up. Invited guests help make the performances an occasion.

Psychologically, we should try to have our students approach what may well be their first acting experience with the enthusiasm of an artist entering upon a creative project, not with the attitude of an exhibitionist exploiting his abilities and charm. They must understand that the play as a whole is the chief consideration

and that their role is only one phase of its success; we must make them feel that we are watching not only their dramatic talent but their sportsmanship, originality, dependability, cooperation and eagerness for the success of the production as well as their part. Our own attitude during the hectic rehearsal period with perhaps eight plays going full blast in one room should be relaxed, encouraging, enthusiastic, and helpful, but we must insist upon every one's doing his share by working intently and courteously with the group. The keenest joy I get from my teaching is watching a room full of active young things blissfully unconscious of the confusion around them all intent upon their group problems—acting, planning sets, looking up props and costumes, arranging schedules. Far be it from me to suggest that my plan in handling the classwork in acting is the best one; I am sure many of you are far more efficient than I am but, as I have been requested to do so, I can only state my plan of action, faulty as it is, and you can take it or leave it to follow your much better one in greater peace. I always feel I have aged ten years after having survived two or three classes putting on plays, but I prefer having the battles on and off at the same time!

The casting of the plays so that every student gets a real opportunity to show his ability and improve his personality at the same time is very difficult. In extra-curricular activities, I work through committees in the selection of plays and casts, sincerely leaving the choices up to them, unless I see serious mistakes looming, but in the classwork I am very arbitrary, assigning the plays and parts for the benefit of the students and the class and not for perfection of production. In addition to assigning parts to build up character and bring out talent, I try to put congenial people together, but there are always the difficult ones who won't cooperate well anywhere—sometimes I put them all in one play together in order to give the eager responsive ones a real chance to prove their abilities. Anyway, I do select plays that are worth the effort of weeks of hard work, assign the parts as wisely as possible, and start them copying their parts and cues.

We then take up the class discussion of acting techniques and rehearsal problems. We review relevant material of previous work: plot structure so they can see how each part is a unit in building to the climax and pointing the theme of the play; vocal and bodily techniques which will most help them in developing their roles, and the analysis of character as stressed in their one-person scenes.

Most of the discussion should center on their relationship to each other in rehearsing and to the audience in performance. The importance of working out their stage business in detail will not occur to them and we must try to avoid having them sit around reciting lines at each other later by taking up stage problems before



Scene from *Gammer Gurton's Needle* as staged by members of Thespian Troupe No. 1 at the Natrona, County, High School, Casper, Wyo. Miss Beulah Bayless, director.

they begin rehearsing. Among these points to be made are the following: keeping the stage picture balanced at all times; pointing the center of interest at every moment and not stealing the attention of the audience from it by overacting; maintaining the character bodily and vocally from each entrance to exit, listening in character, moving in character, living in character until the final curtain; rehearsing all action at every rehearsal, moving directly, not circuitously, to one's goal, rising and sitting and gesturing without fidgeting and wobbling; talking and moving front without conspicuously doing so; keeping the entire audience always in mind but at the same time maintaining the illusion of the fourth wall; learning the stage terms, like *downstage*, *upstage*, *right* and *left stage*; *ad libbing*; *building a scene*; *picking up cues*; *topping speeches*; *dressing the stage*; *holding for laughs*; and *taking the stage*.

They must be made to realize that the class period is not sufficient rehearsal time and that the teacher can not always stay hours after school for one small group, so they must plan to rehearse at their homes weekends and evenings. Memorizing by the whole method should be recommended and we must make them realize that mere memorization is not playing a part but that accurate feeding of the correct lines is the only fair method of having the entire cast give a smooth, rapid production. We must play up good sportsmanship and teamwork in order to avoid all the disasters attendant upon hurt feelings from harsh criticism, jealousy, laziness, and lack of consideration. There is a danger of our stressing technical points so strongly in our effort to get a finished production from them that they may think exterior smoothness more important than creating character and driving home the meaning of the play.

The practical conduct of rehearsals in the classroom must not be overlooked in the discussion. A librarian should be appointed to bring the play books to class and return them daily, and students should not be permitted to take them home at night unless they can guarantee their return in case of their own absence. An explanation of how to use the set, lights and props available to all of them should be made and the suggestion that they bring additional things from home be made but be sure you don't assume any responsibility concerning their return! A schedule of the dates of the plays should be posted after careful consultation and then it must be understood that it will be followed. I have found that even in epidemics the postponing and reorganization doesn't help a bit and that it's better to build up the battle-cry, **THE PLAY MUST GO ON**, from the beginning and have someone read a part at sight in the performance if necessary.

The actual rehearsals take two or three weeks according to the number of plays. As I suggested in the first unit, it is ad-

visable to have members of the advanced class act as directors after they have studied play production; otherwise, I go from group to group coaching as much as possible and trying to offer vital suggestions and build up the group morale. They know that they receive grades for rehearsing and that I expect to see a definite improvement every time I come around. I try to follow the reactions of each student in order to give absolutely fair grades on the final production.

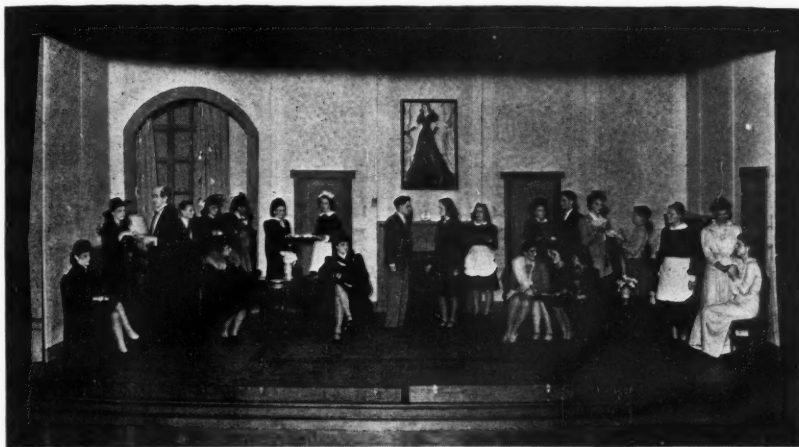
The plays run one a day and if the rehearsals have prophesied a good show, I invite interested classes as guests. Of course the staging is seldom all that we could desire, but if the set creates the proper atmosphere, if the costumes show thought and are appropriate and the make-up adequate, I do not insist on more, but when an artistic, beautifully worked out design is achieved my enthusiasm knows no bounds and on the whole, I am more often pleased than disappointed with the final performance. I expect them to have everything ready in ample time to give a good unhurried show and usually we have some time to discuss the production after it's over while the cast puts things in order. However, bells do ring too soon, props don't get put away and often the disorder throughout the production period is maddening. I won't clean up for them, but roar violently for good backstage order and when the struggle is all over, we have a grand house cleaning with props and costumes labelled and stored away and peace descends once more!

One of our serious problems is our criticism of the plays and the work of the individual students. Usually the majority have worked desperately hard and the failure of a whole production is due to one person's lack of cooperation. We should, therefore, give them all possible praise and encouragement, but on the other hand, artistic integrity demands that they know where they failed to make the most of their opportunity. Parents should be urged to attend the plays and hear

the discussion so that they can understand what we are trying to do for their offspring. Usually they are most appreciative when they see the finished product of the activity which has probably upset and depleted the home considerably!

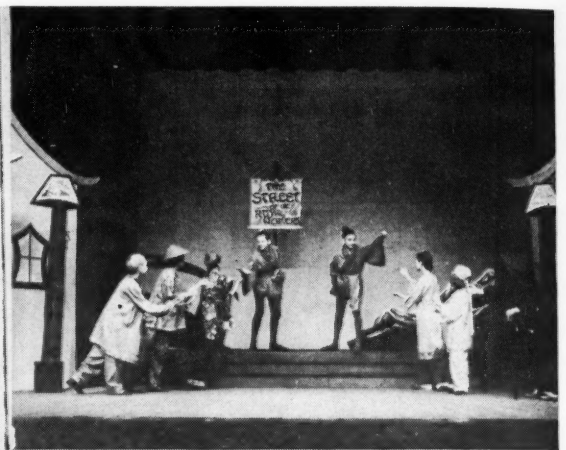
Every student writes up a dramatic criticism of each play in essay form, discussing the play itself, the acting, the production and the audience reaction, and for the play in which he takes part he writes on what he got out of the entire experience.

The play series takes about six weeks work and is the culmination of the interpretative activities for the first semester. In it, the students should have learned how to get everything possible out of a part of analyzing the character, studying their own lines and every comment made about their role, and planning their stage business, costume and make-up. The performance should show them the necessity of careful memorizing and rehearsing and the importance of group cooperation; they should now know personally the value of rapid picking up of cues and feeding of lines, of clever pointing of thought, of skilful use of the voice and body. If they have also actually laughed and cried in rehearsals and therefore really lived the parts, they have increased their life experience and should be more responsive, sympathetic people. Anyway, they have learned to work with other people on an artistic, creative project demanding their entire attention and that is something many of them have never done before. Our business is to encourage every spark of initiative and talent and stop all tendencies toward artificiality and conceit. Our great aim should be the development of our students' imaginative powers, helping them to think, see and feel deeply before trying to portray a role before an audience. They should feel a responsibility to their audience to give their best, and we, in turn, must try to appreciate that best and thus encourage further creative activity on their part.



Cast for the production of *Fanny and The Servant Problem* as given by Miss Jane Marsh at the Keokuk Senior High School, Keokuk, Iowa. Thespian Troupe No. 192.

Scenes from
*The Emperor's
New Clothes*
as given by
the Children's
Theatre of
Terre Haute,
Indiana. Di-
rected by
Lillian D.
Masters.



What Is Good Children's Theater Material?

by LILLIAN D. MASTERS

Director, Children's Theatre, Terre Haute, Indiana

HOW can we children's theatre directors know what is best in the way of plays for our child audiences? We are not endowed with that inherent knowledge which enables us to know immediately what is the best play for a children's theatre production. In this ever-changing world, in this maze of modern educational trends, and with this ever enigmatic modern child, we are constantly adjusting our standards. We simply must work and learn.

What then are the tests for really good children's theatre plays? Here is a flexible list of objectives which we strive for, which we have found to work out, and which constitute what we believe is good children's theatre when we set about this business of selecting plays to produce for children.

First of all we want to provide suitable and proper entertainment for children. There is no denying that we must compete with the Saturday afternoon westerns and the exciting but definitely lowbrow serials. We must choose a play which will appeal to the child so that he prefers to attend the production even if it means missing "Buck Smith" in his latest thriller. Secondly, we want to bring children to the point of appreciating good plays. It isn't that we want to force the classics on them and say, "Here is a masterpiece of literature. You watch it and like it!" We must present those classics so artistically and entertainingly that the children will not be able to keep from enjoying them. Next we want to bring the children to an appreciation of the artistry of good staging and good acting in the plays we produce. We want them to see the illusions of their child world brought to life, we want to

establish ethical standards in the child mind, we want to give them valuable emotional experiences, along with an opportunity to develop imaginative and creative qualities, and, to top it all, there is our big objective of training children in dramatics. This is indeed a large order, and our tests of materials must conform to those objectives.

With all this in mind we must choose a play which will exemplify those objectives. In the final analysis the problem can be narrowed down to three standards by which we test the plays to be included on the season of our children's theatre. First of all, does the play in question have an educational value—is it worth giving? Secondly, does it bring enjoyment to the child, that is, enjoyment as an actor in the play or as a member of the audience? This is most important, for if the child actor and child audience fail to enjoy the play, then all our other objectives are nothing. Third, does the play stimulate the child, stir his imagination and call forth creative ideas? If we find the play to do all this, then we can feel confident that it is truly tested and found worthy of children's theatre production. These standards fit our objectives because we know that if a play provides educational entertainment, stirs the imaginative and creative impulses, and brings enjoyment, then it does all these other things that we hope for our children's theatre—namely, it brings to life the illusions of the child world, it gives valuable emotional experiences, and it teaches an appreciation of artistry in staging and acting.

Now we are ready to apply our test to specific plays. Often we are confused by the great number of plays which are listed

as "children's classics". They are taken for granted as suitable and accepted plays for children, and we are supposed to unquestioningly agree. Many of these so-called "classics" do not fit our tests for good children's plays. Many are badly written and often are possessed of a moral which is so obviously put as to be offensive to our modern, quick-minded children. On the other hand there are those which have stood the test of time and good artistic production and still fit our tests for fine educational entertainment. They meet our objectives and satisfy that child delight in the fantastic illusion of fairyland.

Peter Pan we found to be the consummation of all our artistic and educational aims of a children's theatre production. Difficult though it is, a reward was in store for us when the children applauded the woodland background of the Never Never Land. They missed nothing in the whimsical characterization of an elusive, mischievous and lovable Peter. They rose in unconscious accord and delight to respond to his "Say you believe in fairies!" The same reaction resulted in *Pinocchio*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Ali Baba*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. These old and beloved child tales embodied all the ideals we had for a worth while children's show. We found the child actors imagining and creating in these plays, and bringing to life delightful story-book characters which more than pleased the eager-eyed child audiences.

But a fare of fantastic and fairyland plays for children is not our idea of a well-rounded season. We must educate them at the same time to the best in modern plays. Thereby hangs a bit of difficulty. Good modern children's plays are few and most of them are simply farces or comedies designed primarily for entertainment. How can we uphold the objectives of artistry and educational value when there is a dearth of good modern plays? After careful consideration we found some modern, realistic plays which conformed to our tests. Although they were, first of all, entertaining, we managed to create realistic, modern settings, complete in detail, which provided the ap-

Exercises in Dramatics

by MIRIAM A. FRANKLIN

Director for the Division of Speech, Grove City College, Grove City, Pa.

Creating Characters

EVERY play is a character play. About these image-people the plot weaves. To create and embellish an individual of the stage until he or she seems to live and move is exceedingly important—and exceedingly difficult. Few young players take enough care with intricate details of walks, movements, voices, looks, turns, mannerisms—everything.

In many of the roles you play you are probably cast to depict a character something like you are yourself. But a "character" part is far more interesting; when you are cast for one work hard to present *that person* to your audience instead of yourself. In some instances you may build your character through recollections of people you have known. To these recollections add from your imagination. However, not all can be built in this way because you have never had an opportunity to know such individuals first-hand. Other times you may use someone you know as a model, or use his characteristic traits, then set him in the unfamiliar surroundings. But many characters must grow entirely from imaginings and mental pictures.

Period plays are interesting to work up. The players do not know, first-hand, those they are to represent, hence they must build through imagination. All actions, voices, and peculiarities must fit in with dress, language and manner of the times.

Exercise:

*The Black Flamingo**

By SAM JANNEY

A deserted inn in the north of France served as a refuge to many French nobility fleeing from Paris. POPO has engaged a room and now comes down into the court. POPO enters cautiously, and advances down stage, hugging his great coat around him. CLOTILDE enters R. Does not see POPO at first, but when she does she utters a startled cry, at which he jumps in terror.

CLOTILDE: Ah, mon Dieu—is Monsieur sick?

POPO: No!
CLOTILDE: But Monsieur looks so strangely.
POPO: Ah—you notice it?
CLOTILDE: But yes!
POPO: Splendid! (*In a mysterious whisper*) I am in disguise.
CLOTILDE: Ah, that explains why Monsieur wears a wig.
POPO (*Indignantly*): Wig! That is no wig, girl—see, it is my own beautiful, exquisite, matchless hair! (*He takes off his hat and holds his head toward her.*)
CLOTILDE (*Seizing a handful and giving a mighty yank*): Why, so it is!
POPO: Ouch—! Mon Dieu—are you a wrestler?
CLOTILDE: But why does Monsieur wear such funny clothes? Monsieur is perhaps a gypsy? Monsieur does queer tricks? Ah, good Monsieur, show me how you take a roast pig out of your hat.
POPO: My hat? Heaven forbid! Nay, I can do no such sorcery—but I warrant you, I could make a roast pig disappear fast enough.
CLOTILDE: Ho, then I am cleverer than Monsieur, because I can make a roast pig appear.
POPO: Truly? From where?
CLOTILDE: From my oven, where it is roasting.
POPO (*With eager condescension*): My good girl, as I now behold you, in a better light, I begin to perceive that you possess no small measure of personal beauty.
CLOTILDE: Monsieur—!
POPO: Yes—morbaleu!—rarely have I seen such eyes—such cheeks—such lips—so swanlike a throat—
CLOTILDE: Nay, Monsieur—nay—!
POPO: Truly, truly—and such a form—such ankles—even Marie Antionette herself—ah—! (*He pauses in consternation.*)
CLOTILDE: Yes, Monsieur—yes?
POPO: No, no—I must be careful—I must be discreet.
CLOTILDE (*Eagerly*): You spoke of the Queen!
POPO: Nay—'twas but a slip of the tongue.
CLOTILDE: But you did—you know her—you know the Queen?
POPO: Shhh—not so loud!
CLOTILDE: But you know her—the Queen?
POPO: Hush—hush! (*In a whisper*) I will tell you a secret.
CLOTILDE: Yes, yes—!
POPO: A dark and fearsome secret.
CLOTILDE: A secret about the Queen?
POPO: Yes. (*Lowering his voice again*) The Queen loves me.
CLOTILDE: Holy Father in Heaven—why?
POPO (*In amazement*): Why—? Is it not apparent?
CLOTILDE: Monsieur is very wealthy?

POPO: On the contrary—I am superbly penniless.

CLOTILDE: Monsieur is very clever?

POPO: On my honor, no! I am renowned, far and wide, as the stupidest man in France.

CLOTILDE: Monsieur is very brave?

POPO: I am like a palsied rabbit if a door slams. (*There is a sharp crash of thunder. He starts convulsively*) See—I told you!

CLOTILDE: Monsieur is very passionate?

POPO: Nay—I am like a glacier. But I can arouse passion, passion so furious that strong men weep with rage and mighty warriors wring their hands for envy.

CLOTILDE: Oh, Monsieur—tell me—I die to know—what is this fatal spell, this magic power?

POPO: It is my leg.

CLOTILDE: Blessed Virgin—!

POPO: Ah—you doubt!

CLOTILDE: Nay—!

POPO: Behold, girl! (*He throws aside his great coat and stretches forth a somewhat chubby limb encased in garish hose.*) There stands the most exquisite, shapely, flowerlike leg in Christendom.

CLOTILDE (*Unmoved*): It is rather fat.

POPO: Yokel! Do you not know symmetry when you see it? I tell you, that leg is like music, like wine, like rare perfume. Great ladies weep at the sight of it, young girls swoon at the thought of it. All Versailles envies it. Tell me, as you gaze on its rapturous curves, do you not tremble? Yes, you do tremble, for I see you.

CLOTILDE: Truly—but it is because my feet are wet and I have a chill.

POPO: Clodhopper! You have no soul.

CLOTILDE (*Stubbornly*): I don't need a soul to know fat when I see it.

POPO: Lout! You do not understand contour. See, watch the play of the muscles as I walk. (*He minces elegantly across the stage.*) Is it not a rhapsody?

CLOTILDE (*Dubiously*): Perhaps it is not fat, but only bloat.

POPO: Loon! Lunkhead! I tell you, there is not in all the civilized world, a more rhythmic, a more euphonious, a more mellifluous calf.

CLOTILDE: Ave—and 'twill soon become a cow.

POPO (*In pettish fury*): Dunce! Nit wit! I ignore you—go. You shall not see me dance.

CLOTILDE (*In sudden excitement*): What—? What did you say, Monsieur?

POPO: I said you shall not see me dance.

CLOTILDE: Dance? Ah, Monsieur! Monsieur dances?

POPO: Like a poem—like a wood nymph—like a spring zephyr—but you shall not see me.

CLOTILDE: Ah, but Monsieur—I beg, I implore!

POPO: No!

CLOTILDE: I have never seen the dances of the Court—I beseech you, Monsieur!

POPO: No! I am angry.

CLOTILDE: I entreat you, Monsieur.

POPO: No! I am furious.

CLOTILDE: I pray you, Monsieur.

POPO: No! I am convulsed with rage.

CLOTILDE: I am on my knees, Monsieur.

POPO: I do not notice it.

CLOTILDE: Oh, yes, Monsieur—yes. (*She falls on her knees before him.*)

POPO: Ah—that is better! Now we can talk.

CLOTILDE: Yes, Monsieur! Monsieur will relent?

POPO: Perhaps! (*Bending toward her.*) If I remember rightly, you spoke of a roast pig?

CLOTILDE: But yes, Monsieur.

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preciation of artistry. Bereft of the fairyland sets and costumes, we concentrated on artistry in acting and in realism of production. *Seven Little Rebels*, *Mr. Dooley, Jr.*, *The Ghost of Mr. Penny*, *Mary Poppins*, *Crazy Cricket Farm*, and a few other modern plays appeared to meet our aims and objectives. Most of these plays had a message for children, cleverly concealed in interesting plots and realistic, true-to-life character delineations. As they played entertainingly, these plays at the same time taught, so we met our objective of

educational value.

In the end, the conclusion was evident. If the play met the tests of good theatre, whether classic or modern, in providing good entertainment, in teaching, and in bringing an appreciation of artistry, we labelled it good material for children's theatre. Look for your plays with the test of enjoyment, worth while theme, imaginative qualities and creative opportunities, and undoubtedly you will have a fool-proof standard for good material in children's theatre.

The Technical Director's Page

by ARNOLD S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, University Theatre, State University
of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

"Stage Within the Audience"

EXCLUDING the musical revues, a playgoer in New York City has little opportunity of seeing anything in the way of scenery other than the usual well-done realistic interiors. A few productions each year may break away from realism to the extent of simplifying the settings to a point where a single fragment is permitted to stand for the whole; but generally speaking one can see very little in experimental scenic design.



Prof. Gillette

If one stops to think about it, it's not hard to understand why this should hold true. Our New York theatre is essentially a commercial theatre, a theatre that must rise or fall and be governed by the box office receipts. The producer is a business man who has invested a fair-sized fortune in his belief that the script he has chosen to back will have sufficient appeal for the public to repay his investment and with good luck even pay some dividends. With one eye constantly cocked at the public, with the hope of determining what is currently in favor, the producer is not very likely to branch off very far from what is considered standard, either in the choice of play or in the manner in which it is produced. Under the present conditions, no one who will stop to think about it is likely to blame the producers, if most of our New York productions have a certain similarity about them as far as the design of the scenery is concerned.

ONE of the reasons the European theatre holds such fascination for theatre lovers and students is its diversified methods of design and production. Particularly on the Continent and especially in Russia it's the exception, rather than the rule, to find a European production treated with realistic scenery. Of some seventy productions seen in the Soviet alone, only seven of them had scenery that fell within the classification of "realistic." The rest were delightfully imaginative and in many cases added tremendously to the interest of a production. I do not mean to imply that the treatment of the designs in the remaining sixty-three plays were all unparalleled successes. Not by any means! In some cases the scenery was so unusual in form that it ran away with the play, the designer apparently trying to outdo in interest the work of the playwright.

Freedom for this experimentation in design is due in part to the fact that these theatres are all wholly or in part subsidized by the state which eliminates the necessity of forcing each play to win financial independence by gaining wholehearted public approval. Another factor that cannot be overlooked is that the greatest majority of the European theatres, with the exception of the English, are operated upon the repertory system. A single theatre may have as many as ten or so productions already proven successes, each with its particular audience following that may be depended upon to bring in a steady income. This system automatically eliminates the risky business of putting all the eggs in one basket, as the producer in a commercial theatre is forced to do.

Orson Wells completely upset the theatre-going public in New York with his scenery-less production of *Julius Caesar* back in 1937. We are all aware of the interest and comments fostered by this seemingly revolutionary idea. Newspaper critics made much of it and lecturers on the contemporary drama pounced upon it as a toothsome morsel and the public flocked to see it. This seems to prove that our audiences can and do approve of plays presented against backgrounds other than the everlasting realistic box setting.

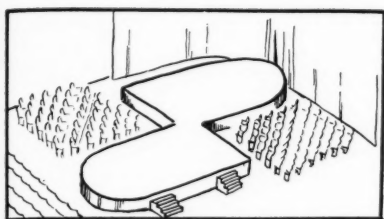
The idea of the space stage is not a new one. Long ago it was found that a stage barren of scenery and bathed in darkness could prove highly effective as a dramatic medium with no other technical help than that provided by carefully focused beams of light. A play treated in this manner is Afinogenov's *Aristocrates* which was produced by N. P. Okhlapkov at the Moscow Realistic Theatre. You will recall that in my second article I discussed a production of *Aristocrates* as it was produced at the Vakhtangov Theatre. It would be difficult to imagine a single play treated in two more different styles. This contrast in production methods was particularly noticeable to me, since I had seen this play on two successive nights. It might prove interesting to get your back issue of *The High School Thespian* (see Volume XIII, No. 2.—Ed.) and compare the designs.

As we entered the Realistic Theatre we were startled by a most unorthodox arrangement of stage and auditorium. In place of the usual plan of auditorium separated from the stage by a curtain we found that the stage had been moved to the center of the orchestra. This stage consisted of two horseshoe-shaped platforms placed in such a fashion that they overlapped slightly at one corner. In the

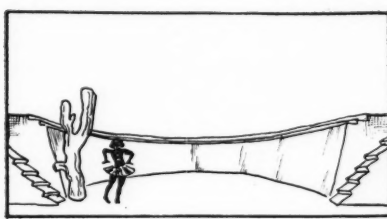
remaining orchestra space not occupied by the platforms were placed the regular auditorium seats that now faced the stage from each side. The remaining part of the auditorium floor and the balcony which overhung it faced toward the stage in the conventional fashion. One of the platforms butted against a set of draperies that hung in a position normally occupied by the proscenium arch. Entrances and exits were made through these drapes onto the stage. The two small stairways on the near side of the stage were also used by the actors who then left or entered the auditorium through the same doors used by the audience. The general arrangement of this stage and auditorium is rather clearly shown in sketch I. Spotlights had been hung from the balcony rail and from unusual positions along the side walls of the auditorium where no attempt had been made to conceal them.

You will recall that eight settings were used in the Vakhtangov production of this play. The action starts with a group of political prisoners being driven across the steppes of Russia in a howling snow storm. A scene, incidentally, that would tax the ingenuity of any designer and technical staff if it were to be treated realistically. This scene was handled in the Okhlapkov production in the following fashion. The lights in the auditorium were dimmed out and a single shaft of light was thrown on the entrance through the draperies. Into this pool of light came six masked property men who whirled and danced about to appropriate music. Each carried a small bag, from which he took confetti to throw into the air. After the property men had left the stage by means of the small stairs the actors followed them onto the stage. I must confess that during the first few scenes considerable attention went to the property men but before the play was half over they attracted no more attention than the property man of an old Chinese play. They were accepted as a staging convention pure and simple. No scenery of any kind was placed upon the stage. What few properties that were not handled by the actors themselves were changed by one or two of the property men. If a table were needed two property men scooted to the proper position and sat on the floor facing each other. Between them they stretched a red cloth that formed a very rough table, but in all cases sufficient for the business.

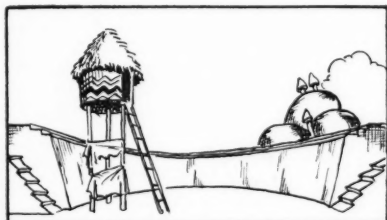
A play treated in this fashion makes three rather exacting demands. It requires first of all that the play itself must be suitable for such streamlined handling. Secondly, the direction must be clever in the extreme and then the actors must adapt their business and lines to an audience that faces them on practically all sides. This method of staging has found favor in different groups of players in all parts of the States where it is generally known as the Living-Room or Drawing-Room theatre. Glenn Hughes's new Penthouse Theatre in Seattle is a rather sub-



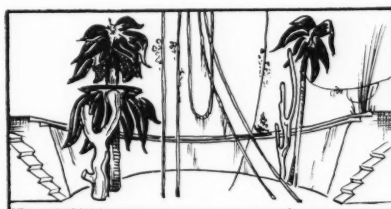
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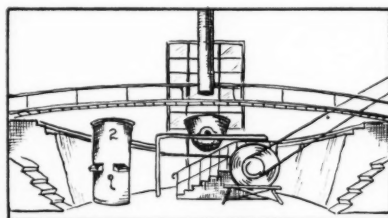
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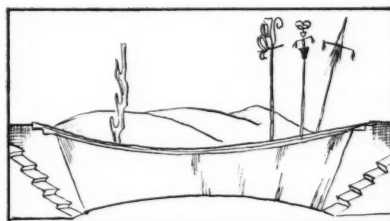
III



IV



V



VI

stantial token of the permanency of this general type of "stage within the audience" treatment.

Combining formalism and simplified settings has long proved to be a highly effective and successful treatment for the designs of certain types of plays. One of the few real honest-to-goodness propaganda plays seen in the Soviet was a beautifully produced, sugar-coated pill called *The Negro Boy and the Monkey* that received its presentation with The Theatre for Young Spectators in Moscow. The text of the play is interesting enough in its obviousness to warrant a synopsis of it here. A little negro boy, whom we'll call Nietchie, lives with his friends in a native village in Africa. Nietchie and his playmates are given cookies by his mother and go off into the jungle to play. Nietchie shares his cookies with a monkey who becomes his fast friend and who later saves his life when Nietchie is attacked by a huge snake. It so happens that the monkey is captured by an expedition that is collecting animals for a circus and Nietchie sets out in hot pursuit of his friend. He arrives at the coast only to find that he is too late for the expedition has already sailed. A kindly Soviet ship Captain takes pity on broken-hearted Nietchie and takes him to Moscow where

he finds work in a candy factory. But even so, Nietchie grieves for his friend and his home. To cheer him up Nietchie's new friends in the factory take him to a theatre one evening where a circus is playing. And as you have already guessed, the monkey is one of the performers. There's a great scene of reunion and to make the story complete, Nietchie and the monkey are sent back to Africa by airplane to start a Communistic Youth Movement among his friends there.

This production was given in the theatre that had formerly been the home of the Second Moscow Art Theatre and boasts an exceptionally spacious and well-equipped stage. The opening scene reveals a deep stage with a permanent U-shaped platform that was to remain throughout all the scenes of the play. The platform was about seven feet high with a slightly slanting frontal face. Nietchie and his friends could scamper up and down this face as well as along its full length. The platform was painted an off-white and played against a very light blue cyclorama. An oddly shaped tree form was the only bit of additional scenery used for this first scene (shown in Sketch II) that represented a place near Nietchie's village. Sketch III shows the village with one practical tree house and three more

Scholarship Awards

Contest Scholarship. Available to those demonstrating superior speech ability through effective participation in speech or drama contests. Above average general scholarship required. Value of scholarship, \$200.00.

Alumni Scholarship. For men only who wish to work toward the A. B. or B. L. I. degree. Same qualifications as Contest Scholarship but given by the Regional Alumni Associations of Emerson College. Value of scholarship, \$200.00.

For further information concerning these two scholarships, write Dean Howard H. Higgins, Emerson College, 130 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

* * *

While the School of Drama of the Goodman Memorial Theatre of Chicago has no scholarships for undergraduates, students who have completed the certificate course are eligible for fourth-year scholarships if their work is of a markedly superior order. These scholarships—two for men and two for women—are awarded by the unanimous vote of the faculty.

Undergraduate students are eligible for Working Agreements which enable them to earn one-half or the whole of their tuition. These are granted only once a year at the beginning of the fall term. Applications must be in the office of the Registrar not later than July 1st. These applications are acted upon about August 1st. Working Agreement students are employed in various jobs about the theatre, usually of a nature which adds to their training. Because of the kind of work available, Working Agreements are awarded to men beginning in their first year and to women in the second.

(The working agreement is worth \$300.00 for full working agreements, and \$150.00 for half working agreements.)

Students holding working agreements do not have the requisite time for earning more than a small portion of their living costs outside of the theatre. We recommend that such students do not handicap themselves by trying to do any outside work. No student should come to the school planning to earn all his expenses.

Additional information may be secured from Louise Dale Spoor, Registrar, School of Drama, Goodman Memorial Theatre, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

cut out huts placed beyond the platform. The Jungle scene in the fourth sketch was particularly attractive in its simplicity. The vines shown hanging in the center of the stage were heavy ropes suspended from the grid and upon these Nietchie and the monkey had many a breath taking ride across the full width of the stage. They took off and landed on the down stage sides of the platform or up onto the platform concealed in the tree. The candy factory in Moscow was summed up by the big window at the back, the elevated "cat walk" and the awe-inspiring machinery used to mix the candy. The last scene finds us again in a vicinity just outside Nietchie's home village in Africa, with the cutout hills and the totems extending above the platform.

This was one of the very few plays where I've seen the moving pictures and the legitimate drama combined with any degree of unity. The difficult scenes of Nietchie's fight with the snake and his rescue, the sequence of his chasing the men who captured the monkey and the final flight back to Africa were done by black and white animated cartoons that were projected upon the cyclorama without a moment's delay in the action of the play. One would simply have to see this done in order to appreciate its effectiveness.

Motion Picture Appreciation

Edited by HAROLD TURNEY

Chairman, Department of Drama, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles, Calif.

Arsenic and Old Lace

A Warner Brothers picture.

IN *Arsenic and Old Lace*, two otherwise sweet old ladies with an overpowering desire to give old gentlemen glasses of wine with poison in it dispense thirteen such concoctions in the course of the story. As they figure it out, they have a mission in life—the mission of first finding elderly gentlemen who have no friends or relatives on earth and, second, of bringing them a speedy peace via the arsenic route.

To gain their ends, they hang a "Room for Rent" sign over the door of their Brooklyn home; this in spite of the fact that they actually have no room for rent and that they have no use for the revenue it might bring. Baiting their victims thus, they next learn from them whether or not they are church-goers. If they are, they may step inside. They further question the gentlemen on the extent of their friends and family. If they are well supplied in these, they may leave. The room, they announce, is not for rent after all. If, on the other hand, they are without kin or close friends, they are allowed to sit down and, within a few minutes, are offered a glass of elderberry wine, spiked liberally with arsenic. Peace comes almost at once.

That theme, as conceived by Joseph Kesselring in the stage play by the same name, turned out fifteen months ago to be New York first-nighters' idea of the most uproariously funny comedy to reach Broadway in a decade. Apparently they were not alone in their opinion. The Fulton Theater, where it opened and where it continues to draw capacity houses, with the biggest advance business of any play in New York, still is rocked every night by those who come to shudder and remain to howl with laughter.

Warner's studio, which has been a little more alert than other Hollywood companies in seizing Broadway hits, quickly purchased the Kesselring comedy and dispatched their "ace" director, Frank Capra, to Gotham to acquaint himself with the property. Completely captivated by *Arsenic and Old Lace*, Capra straightway started bidding for the film services of three of the original stage cast—the Misses Josephine Hull and Jean Adair, and John Alexander, who wanders throughout the play under the pleasant misapprehension that he is the late President Teddy Roosevelt.

The producers, Russell Crouse and Howard Lindsay (father of the New York company of *Life With Father*), politely pointed out that inasmuch as the three

players were appearing nightly in the healthy play and were apt to continue to do so for the next several months, or years, their presence in Hollywood was out of the question. Capra mulled this awhile; even considered using Hollywood people for the poles, but soon returned to his original conclusion that these three and these three alone would do for the screen parts. Negotiations were re-opened, even though the starting date for the film was at hand. Finally, at the absolute deadline, it was agreed that the studio should be allowed to remove the players from the New York cast for a stipulated time, rush them into the picture, and return them East in as good a condition as could be hoped for.

Meanwhile, at the Hollywood end, Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Jack Carson, Raymond Massey and Peter Lorre were waiting for the New York threesome. The trio reported on the set October 20th and filming began immediately.

EXCEPT for a minor film role some ten years ago, of which she says "we don't talk about that," Josephine Hull has confined her several decades of acting to the New York stage. For two seasons she was the daft Penelope Sycamore in the Kaufman and Hart Pulitzer Prize comedy, *You Can't Take It With You*. She was the member of that Morning-side Heights clan who took to writing plays because someone left a typewriter in her house by mistake. Bristling with pencils in her hair-do, she would sweep the cats from in front of her machine and tackle a new plot every act or so.

Later she moved a borough to the east, and with her stage sister, Jean Adair, started innocently spiking her homemade elderberry wine with potions of lethal arsenic, to the joy of those on the other side of the footlights.

Plump, and correspondingly jovial, Miss Hull seems to possess a special penchant for making playwrights pen roles for her. When Joseph Kesselring sat down to write *Arsenic and Old Lace*, it was with her in mind as his Abby Brewster, just as Kaufman and Hart had built Penelope around her stage personality.

A native of Newtonville, Massachusetts, Josephine Hull made her stage debut with the Castle Square theater company in Boston. After serving an apprenticeship in stock, she went to New York in *The Bridge*, under the aegis of Harrison Grey Fiske. Shelley Hull played opposite her. He was the leading romantic actor of his day. The two carried their on-stage romance into non-working hours, and it

wasn't long before she appended Hull to her maiden name.

In recent years Miss Hull has appeared in *A Thousand Summers*, *An American Dream*, *Encore*, *Fata Morgana*, and *After Tomorrow*. George Kelly wrote roles for her into *Craig's Wife* and *Daisy Mayme*. A less commanding person it would be hard to meet, yet she has taken over the directorial reins for several productions, notably *Roger Bloomer*, *Why Not?* and *Electra*.

In tracing back the career of Jean Adair, one finds it full of mother love. She made her first New York appearance in the title role of Jules Eckert Goodman's *Mother*, then played a mother, a mother-in-law, and a grandmother, all in one evening in Sam Harris' production of *It's a Boy*. Later she continued the cycle by interpreting Ina Clair's mother in *End of Summer*, Elisha Cook's mother in Eugene O'Neill's play, *Ah, Wilderness*, the matriarch of *For Services Rendered*, and a plain Ma in *Everything's Jake*. In fact, when Dwight Deere Wiman next engaged her for the venomous Demetria Riddle in *On Borrowed Time*, it took her all of the first week of rehearsals to become reconciled to the fact that Peter Holden was not her son but merely a very disagreeable nephew in the play.

The remaining member of the trio from the New York production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, John Alexander, got into the film version by deliberately turning his back on Hollywood two years ago. "Lord knows I wanted to crash the movies," he says today. "For ten straight summers and one whole winter I hounded casting offices and studios until I'm sure I became an anathema to talent scouts. During the time I did manage to land a couple of small roles as sheriff this-or-that, but by a year ago last September I was certain that Hollywood wanted no part of me or my services. I returned to New York and, through my friendship with Howard Lindsay, co-producer of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, was given an opportunity to read for the role of Teddy. We went into rehearsals in November and opened in Baltimore the next month. The play settled down to a solid run on Broadway January 10, 1941, and I expect it to run through 1942."

Alexander hasn't always played daffy characters. Starting in Cincinnati stock, he played in support of Margaret Anglin in two Shakespearean productions, then joined Robert B. Mantell's troupe in 1916, remaining with it for twelve years. During this time he essayed more than sixty Shakespearean roles, including Macbeth, Hamlet, Shylock, Orlando, Marc Anthony, and Mercutio. With Mantell's death, he kept on with his classical interpretations, touring the country for the next three years opposite Genevieve Hamper.

Finally he tackled the tough job of establishing himself in modern vehicles.



Edward Everett Horton, Josephine Hull, and Jean Adair in *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

His first Broadway success was as the dumb Greek wrestler in *Swing Your Lady* in a part written especially for him. Because of this, it came as a more than mild shock when Hollywood said he wasn't the type to do the part in films. *Swing Your Lady* ran through the years of 1936 and 1937. Then came *All the Living* for a year, followed by another year with *Kiss the Boys Goodbye*. Again he thought he'd crash Hollywood, but by the time the Paramount studios came to film it, the character he portrayed, Heywood Brown, had died. Hollywood rightfully thought it would be in bad taste to include his characterization, so John stayed on Broadway for a year's run of *Morning's At Seven*, followed by *Arsenic and Old Lace*, the lucky third of his Broadway hits to be filmed.

AFTER filming the highly successful picture *Meet John Doe*, Frank Capra began immediate preparations for the direction of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. He is a painstaking director, as evidenced by his earlier films, especially *You Can't Take It With You*. Long before a camera starts grinding on a Capra picture, there are lengthy sessions of line-rehearsals. A line-rehearsal, as differentiated from a regular rehearsal, is a pre-shooting huddle in which Capra takes his players to some remote section of the shooting stage to hear them read their lines from the script. This serious, grinding review usually develops into a re-vamping session, when lines are changed, altered, discarded, added to, and given considerable business or action to help them register the situations.

A line-rehearsal, Capra fashion, may

take anywhere from an hour to all morning, with the director in the thick of it. It is only when the scene to be shot fairly glistens with perfection that Capra orders "Light 'em up!" and the huge arc lights go on.

Then, while the players rest or continue studying their lines, Capra lines up the forthcoming shot. This is to say that, with the aid of his first cameraman (on *Arsenic and Old Lace*, Sol Polito), he moves the players' stand-ins from position to position, precisely as men on a chess-board, following them all the while with his camera finder, a part of the camera that enables him to see the action just as it will appear on the screen. This is another long drawn-out process. As the director moves about the set, he is followed by a camera assistant, who places chalk-marks or pieces of adhesive tape on the floor at his feet to indicate a camera pause. Satisfied that his players know their lines and that his cameraman knows his wishes about how the scene should be shot, Capra retires to the side lines while the endless job of lighting the set properly is begun.

With the set properly lighted, Capra dismisses the stand-ins and calls his players for rehearsal on the set. The scene is probably a master or key scene. This means that the scene is plot material and may run without interruption for as many as six minutes. Later it will be broken down for the close-ups. During this time Capra darts in and out of the scene, whispering advice to this player and that; quietly correcting errors; instilling confidence where it is needed.

Actual rehearsals such as these may again take anywhere from an hour to

ACADEMY AWARD WINNERS

IRVING THALBERG AWARD

WALT DISNEY for most consistent high quality production achievement by an individual producer.

OUTSTANDING PICTURE

How Green Was My Valley, 20th.

PERFORMANCES

Actor: GARY COOPER in *Sergeant York*, Warners.

Actress: JOAN FONTAINE in *Suspicion*, RKO.

Supporting Actor: DAVID CRISP in *How Green Was My Valley*, 20th.

Supporting Actress: MARY ASTOR in *The Great Lie*, Warners.

BEST DIRECTION

JOHN FORD for *How Green Was My Valley*, 20th.

BEST ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE STORY

HARRY SEGALL for *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*, Columbia.

BEST WRITTEN SCREENPLAY

SIDNEY BUCHMAN and SETON I. MILLER for *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*, Columbia.

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

HERMAN J. MANKIEWICZ and ORSON WELLES for *Citizen Kane*, RKO.

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

(Black and White)

ARTHUR MILLER for *How Green Was My Valley*, 20th.

(Color)

ERNEST PALMER and RAY RENNEHAN for *Blood and Sand*, 20th.

BEST FILM EDITING

WILLIAM HOLMES for *Sergeant York*, Warners.

BEST ART DIRECTION

(Black and White)

RICHARD DAY and NATHAN JURAN for *How Green Was My Valley*, 20th.

(Color)

CEDRIC GIBBONS and URIE MCCLEARY for *Blossoms in the Dust*, MGM.

BEST SET DIRECTION

(Black and White)

THOMAS LITTLE for *How Green Was My Valley*, 20th.

(Color)

EDWIN B. WILLIS for *Blossoms in the Dust*, MGM.

BEST SOUND RECORDING

JACK WHITNEY for *That Hamilton Woman*, General Service.

BEST SCORING OF MUSICAL PICTURE

FRANK CHURCHILL and OLIVER WALLACE for *Dumbo*, Walt Disney.

BEST SCORING OF DRAMATIC PICTURE

BERNARD HERRMANN for *All That Money Can Buy*, RKO.

BEST SONG

JEROME KERN for music and OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II for lyrics for *The Last Time I Saw Paris* from *Lady Be Good*, MGM.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

FARCIOT EDOUARD and GORDON JENNINGS for photography and LOUIS MESENKOP for sound for *I Wanted Wings*, Paramount.

DOCUMENTARIES

Short: CHURCHILL'S ISLAND, Canadian Film Board-UA.

half a day, but finally comes the time—there has to come the time even with Frank Capra—when he orders, "All right now—Quiet for a take!" The scene is then shot once, twice, ten or twenty times.

Staging the High School Play

This department is designed to assist teachers in choosing, casting, and producing plays at the high school level. Suggestions as to plays which should be discussed next or how this department can be of greater assistance to teachers will be welcomed.

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Thespian Senior Councilor and Director of Dramatics at Berea College, Berea, Ky.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

By ALICE CHURCHILL

As produced at Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York and directed by Mr. William Dean.

Pride and Prejudice, a sentimental comedy in 3 acts, by Helen Jerome. Adapted from the novel by Jane Austen. 10m. 16f. \$25.00 royalty. Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York, N. Y.

Suitability

EVEN though *Pride and Prejudice* is essentially a comedy, it also has its many serious moments. But because of this serious side I believe that it gives high school students a real chance to display their talent. I believe high school students need opportunities to learn how to express themselves in more serious drama. This play is difficult enough to make them really work at it and develop their talent, but not so hard but what they can do a very commendable job of it. The play offers many students a chance. The play is set in 1796, making it valuable as a period study.

Plot

I quote from the script of the play: "The play concentrates on Mrs. Bennet's determination to get her daughters married. Jane, Elizabeth, and Lydia are likely-looking girls in an unlikely-looking period when a woman's one possible career is matrimony. To be a wife was success. Anything else was failure.

"Jane and her Mr. Bingley and Lydia with her Mr. Wickham are quite content with the god of things as they are; not Elizabeth! She actually refuses to marry Mr. Collins whom she openly deplores and Mr. Darcy whom she secretly adores.

"The play is the story of the duel between Elizabeth and her pride and Darcy and his prejudice. Each gives in before

the evening is over, and pride and prejudice meet halfway."

Casting

Mrs. Bennet, the mother, is a very flighty woman who faints at the slightest provocation, but is very demanding in what she wants. Her sole ambition is to see her daughters well married; consequently, she runs their lives and everyone else's. She is the nosey type, domineering. This part needs a girl with a flare for comedy and an ability to let loose. She fills the stage when she is on it—the Mary Boland type.

Elizabeth Bennet is a very strong-minded girl, sensible and witty; she can hold her own in any group. Pick a girl who is or can be trained to be poised and charming, and she should be attractive looking—preferably tall and dark. She is the Greer Garson type if you happened to see the movie version. They play centers around Elizabeth, so she must be played by someone who has talent for the humorous and the dramatic, and a willingness to learn and understand the part. There are many possibilities in this role for both director and actor.

Jane Bennet is a very quiet, homey, sweet and feminine girl, loves deeply but shyly, but is a little too much influenced by her mother. Elizabeth likes to protect her. This cannot be type cast; the girl must be able to act this role.

Lydia Bennet is a very lively and strong-willed girl, impulsive to the dangerous point, but smart and witty. You could type cast this part and spend time toning her down for the reserve necessary to the period in which the play is written, but still not lose the life and vigor of Lydia. On the other hand it is also a chance for some acting talent.

ALICE CHURCHILL

MISS CHURCHILL is being presented for the first time to readers of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN.

She is a graduate of Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, and while there, studied with the great actress, Maude Adams. The summer immediately following her graduation she joined the Stephens Players, a summer theatre group. Later, Miss Churchill studied at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, where she was graduated with the Bachelor of Science degree. She specialized in play production. While a student at Ithaca, Miss Churchill became interested in speech correction and this past summer was assistant speech correctionist in the Watertown, New York, Speech Clinic.

It is a pleasure to present Miss Churchill's article on the staging of Helen Jerome's excellent adaptation of the ever-popular romantic classic, "Pride and Prejudice," by Jane Austen. I hope that this presentation will see more high schools integrating dramatics and literature by producing excellent dramatizations of great novels.

Lady Catherine De Bourgh is a most domineering woman. A wonderful chance for some good character acting.

Mr. Collins is a gallant pretender, a super-polite gentleman of his day. A good chance for comedy. Pick preferably a tall boy, or a very short one would make for comedy just as well.

Mr. Darcy is a suave, smooth, man-of-the-world gentleman of his time—cutting in his wit (a challenge to Elizabeth and her wit), poised. Needs a nice-looking boy, able to carry off this type.

Mr. Bingley is just a genteel gentleman of the period. A straight role. Boy must be able to be at ease and carry himself well.

Mr. Bennet, the father, is a tolerant gentleman, conservative and yet with a sense of humor and an understanding love for his wife and family. Pick a boy who can play an older man,—a real chance for acting. Spend time on teaching him to follow through with all his actions for portraying an older man. Details count here.

The many other characters are quite regular and more easily cast, but require poise and directness.

Set used for Act I; Act II, Scene 1; and Act III in the production of *Pride and Prejudice* as given at Ithaca College. Designed by George Hoerner.



Directing

This is not what you would call a fast-moving play, but it absolutely must not drag. This point must be watched very carefully because it is easy to let it slip into too slow a pace.

Mrs. Bennet and Mr. Collins comprise most of the comedy scenes, so it is well to exaggerate them just a little, but don't overdo them. Have Mrs. Bennet almost bounce when she walks, and have Mr. Collins be exceedingly polite and bow very low on his entrances, introductions, etc. The proposal scene between Mr. Collins and Elizabeth (sc. 1, Act II) is a superb chance for dramatic acting by Elizabeth and sheer comedy from Mr. Collins which the audience will relish if it is well timed. An added bit of comedy at the beginning of this scene is when Mrs. Bennet leaves Mr. Collins and Elizabeth alone in the drawing room—have Mrs. Bennet back out of the door and as she closes it reluctantly precede it with a giggle and a knowing look, and perhaps a shake of the finger at Elizabeth and Mr. Collins.

Train the girls to take mincing steps as they walk so as to give a gliding effect when they wear the long, full-skirted costumes.

Timing is of greatest importance. Laugh lines must be pointed, and the dramatic moments must be intense, not hurried but not dragged either.

It will help immensely if the students have read all or part of Jane Austen's book, or have seen the movie version with Greer Garson. Either of these will help to give them a better idea of the type of characters they are to portray, and a better understanding of that period in history. If they have not read the book, the director will do well to read the description of the characters from it to his actors during the first few days of rehearsals in which he explains the play and before he starts his blocking out.

Rehearsals

Because this is a rather difficult play and time must be taken to develop it, Ithaca College found it necessary to have six weeks of rehearsals. The first few rehearsals were taken to explain the play and the relation of each character to every other character, so that each actor knew just where and why he fitted in, and how he developed in the play. After these preliminaries, the play was rehearsed intensively for five hours every day (3:00 to 5:00 in afternoons, and 7:00 to 11:00 at night) except Sunday, for the remaining five and a half weeks. The last week was used for dress rehearsals. It is well to have at least two complete dress rehearsals, if possible.

Stage Problems

The biggest stage problem of this play, for high schools at least, is the fact that it has three sets. The way Ithaca College solved this problem was by making the main set (the drawing room of the Ben-

COSTUME CHART

CHARACTER	ACT I	ACT II	ACT III
Mrs. Bennet	Blue and white striped dress, white cap. White satin evening gown, fan, white shoes.	Black and white challee dress, white house cap, black shoes.	Golden brown dress, or a gold dress, black lace apron, fan, shoes.
Elizabeth	Green and white dress, green velvet jacket, red evening gown with scarf; fan, shoes. Also ribbon for hair, bags, fan, shoes, curls.	Figured challee dress with scarf, shoes.	White dress with green dots and a scarf.
Lady Catherine De Bourgh		Brown and gold dress, hat, parasol, yellow gloves, red hair.	Black traveling suit, large hat with lace, bag, parasol.
Mrs. Gardiner		Grey embroidered satin gown, long black coat, grey hair.	
Lady Lucas	Green dress, bonnet, cape, gloves, large scarf (grey and black), grey curls.		
Jane	Yellow dress, white and silver evening gown, curls, fan, silver shoes.	Blue flannel dress with scarf.	Peach and black dress and scarf.
Lydia	Tan dress, blue and grey plaid evening gown, fan, curls.	Tan silk dress with embroidery.	Grey dress with blue jacket and bonnet, parasol, black lace, gloves.
Charlotte	Figured dress, hat, muff, red and white shoes, green satin evening gown, silver scarf, curls.	Peach dress with black and white jacket, bonnet, parasol.	
Agatha	Green and white silk gown and headdress, black moire cape, mitts, bangs.		
Amanda	Yellow crepe evening gown with head-dress, curls, fan.		
Belinda	Blue satin train dress, grey scarf, white mitts, headdress, curls.		
Amelia	Yellow and green moire evening dress, green scarf, green mitts, curls.		
Maggie		Black maid's dress, white frilled apron, cap, pleated collar.	
Miss Bingley	Deep wine velvet evening dress, black cloak, black gloves, hair back.	Tan dress, green velvet jacket, bonnet, tan gloves, parasol, fan.	
Mrs. Lake	Blue flannel dress and apron, 2 hats, 2 pleated collars.		
Mr. Darcy	Grey pants, red vest, black coat, boots, long black cloak, riding whip, grey ascot. White satin pants, green satin vest, black coat, white gloves, white ascot, white silk handkerchief, monocle, white stock, black slippers.	White flannel pants, yellow vest, black coat, black gloves, socks, slippers.	Tan pants, brown coat, orange vest, brown gloves, brown slippers or boots.
Mr. Bennet	Grey pants, grey vest, grey coat, black shoes, long green coat. Same grey pants, black coat, white ascot, high hat.	Grey pants, grey vest, grey coat, black shoes.	Grey pants, light blue vest, grey coat, black shoes.
Mr. Collins	Black pants, grey vest, black coat, white gloves, black shoes. Black pants, black vest, black coat, white gloves, high hat, silk handkerchief, black stock.	Grey pants, grey vest, black coat, black shoes, handkerchief.	
Mr. Bingley	Grey pants, blue vest, black coat, boots, black gloves, black hat, black cloak. White pants, white vest with frilled shirt, black coat, white socks, black slippers, white gloves, handkerchief.		Grey pants, yellow vest, grey coat, hat, grey gloves, black shoes.
Fitzwilliam		Military red coat, plaid pants, plaid sash, white leather belt, gold sash, boots, monocle, jock strap, white stock.	
Mr. Wickham	Military red coat, white flannel pants, white belt, sword.		Same as Act I, but add pair of high boots and military hat.
Hill	Black coat, black or grey pants, black shoes, grey vest, stockings.	Same as Act I.	Same as Act I.
Captain Denny	Military red coat, white flannel pants, white belt, sword, boots or not (as you like), white gloves.		
1st young man	Black coat, white pants, white vest, black hat, white gloves.		
2nd young man	Black coat, white pants, white vest, black hat, gloves, long black cloak.		

net's home) deep enough and wide enough so that the other sets of the Aunt's parlor and Lady Catherine De Bourgh's drawing room could be set up inside of the first. This is done by arranging it so that the furniture and a few flats of the first set can be stacked out of the way for the

second and third sets. These last two sets are shallow and less wide than the first so they can be easily and quickly set up.

The set of the Bennet's drawing room should create a definite atmosphere, showing that this family is not in the upper class of the eighteenth century period but

are, nevertheless, trying to "keep up with the Joneses." The room is not at all ostentatious but quite liveable, and a lot of bric-a-brac around gives a hint of the mother's type and her ideas of being socially correct.

The conservatory on upstage left of this set is quite a little problem in itself. It was solved by building several trellises upstage and entwining them with vines made of wire wrapped with green crepe paper. A box filled with crepe paper flowers may also be used if desired.

Another thing to watch in building your sets is to be sure that all your doors are wide enough to allow the big skirts of this period to pass through them without too much obvious trouble. Double doors and French doors are preferable.

The general color effect of the Bennet's drawing room should not be bright, but rather give a dark and even a little bit of musty feeling to it. The Aunt's parlor may be a good deal brighter and show right away that she is respectably well-off. Blue and white are good colors for this room.

The drawing room of Lady Catherine De Bourgh should give the definite impression of elegance and orderliness. Purples and lavenders help to create this atmosphere. Of course, the furniture should be as near to the eighteenth century period as is possible to find.

Make-Up

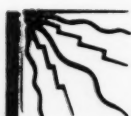
Make-up for this play is not very complicated. Straight make-up for most parts, except Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet, and Mr. Collins. These are just middle-aged make-ups. Wigs are not needed if girls' hair is long enough to arrange in the period coiffures; the men should have sideburns, possibly small mustaches. A solution of sugar and water will help immensely to keep the girls curls in place during the course of the play.

Budget

This play can be kept within a budget of \$100.00 if scenery is already on hand. Otherwise it may be necessary to add \$20 more to the budget. The budget of \$100 is implying a royalty of \$25, and advertising of \$15, leaving \$60 for other expenses, unless you do as Ithaca College did and order your costumes from a costume house, which might add another \$80 or so to the budget. But the costumes can be made, therefore keeping within your \$100.00.

Publicity

At least two weeks in advance of the play, students painted two large posters which were set up on the campus. Also many small posters were printed and students on the publicity crew were sent out to distribute them among the various stores and restaurants of the town and asked to have them put conspicuously in their windows. Most of the stores are very obliging in allowing one to do this. A notice or two was put in the local paper



With the Radio Editor

A page published for teachers and students interested in radio activities at the high school level. Comments and suggestions from readers are welcomed.

Edited by G. HARRY WRIGHT

Department of Speech, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.



Program Review

America's Town Meeting of the Air, NBC Blue, Thursday 9:00-10:00 P.M., EST. Sustaining. Originating Station, WJZ.

IN times of national peril, when a whole people is engaged in a mighty struggle for the preservation of its free institutions, it is important that all citizens be kept accurately informed as to what is going on, why it is going on, and what may be expected in the future. It is important, too, that the actions of our public servants be held up to public scrutiny, that they may be interpreted, criticized, and defended. All of this is necessary to the formation of intelligent public opinion and to the building of public morale that can weather the shocks of the vicissitudes of war. This important service Town Hall, Inc., a public service institution of many ramifications, attempts to render in its weekly radio program, *America's Town Meeting of the Air*. On this program public issues are discussed by three or four experts or specialists of varying (and often violently conflicting) points of view, in brief speeches. Then the moderator brings them together before the microphone to discuss the talks further, to cross-examine each other, and to examine co-operatively the statements that each has made. This often results in lively arguments. Then the *Town Hall* audience is allowed to join in the proceedings, to ask questions of the experts, or to take issue with them. It all adds up to an hour of lively, interesting, illuminating discussion. The listener feels at the end that he has received information which helps him in forming an intelligent opinion.

The program is successful and valu-

able in that it does as much as any one agency can do to interest the general listener in public problems, to inform him concerning them, and to equip him to participate as a useful citizen. The influence of the broadcast is indicated by the fact that there are hundreds of *Town Meeting* groups all over the nation that gather weekly at loud speakers in their own towns to listen to the program and then, after the hour is over, to discuss the problem further among themselves. Frequently questions sent in by these groups by telegraph or long distance telephone are read and answered on the air.

The program succeeds because it chooses vital topics, selects competent speakers, and maintains an attitude which while it is lively and controversial, is strictly fair, serious, and dignified. American people like those qualities in discussion of public affairs.

Why not try listening to a *Town Meeting* some Thursday night. Then, if you like it, organize a listening group of your own. You might enjoy hearing your group's question discussed over the air some night, if you can scrape up the price of a telegram.

* * *

Perhaps you've heard announcers in the past month or two saying "This is the Blue Network" and not adding "of the National Broadcasting Company"; and perhaps you've wondered why the omission. It all goes back to the Federal Communications Commission's ruling of last year which ordered NBC to dispose of the Blue Network. This has been done, and the Blue Network is now a separate corporation. I believe that its present organization is not meant to be permanent, and final purchase and ownership is still open.

a week or so previous, and one just a day or two before the opening night as a reminder.

Results

An appreciation of Jane Austen's great novel and Helen Jerome's excellent dramatization is gained from acting in *Pride and Prejudice*. It gives the high school student some interesting information as to the general habits, ideas and ideals, costumes, social ways and customs, and sheer charm of the romantic eighteenth century. Not only the actors but the audience, too, will gain in this way.

The audience and the actors will love the sarcasm of Mr. Darcy and the way that Elizabeth throws it back at him. And

the loveable but exasperating Mrs. Bennet will bring many a laugh.

There is valuable training to be gained in the learning of the clear speech required, which may be stage speech, if desired, and in the poise gained by learning to walk in and handle the big skirts of those days.

If costumes are made this is a wonderful chance for those girls who like to sew. And the boys who are potential architects, scene designers, painters, artists, electricians, and mechanics will find much to tap their ingenuity and imagination in developing and building the sets. The pictures and floor plans in the script from Samuel French will be found to be valuable aids.

In the May issue we stage *Moor Born*, the story of the Bronte Sisters.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



1. Marjorie Eustis as Aunt March and James Hives as Mr. Laurence in *Little Women*, a production of Thespian Troupe No. 261 at the Fairmont, Minn., High School. Directed by Miss Caryl Meyer.

2. Scene from *Night of January 16* at the Edward Lee McClain High School, Greenfield, Ohio. Directed by Mr. Wylie Fetherlin. (Troupe No. 400.)

3. Scene from *June Mad* as given by members of Troupe No. 317 at the Field-Kindley High School of Coffeyville, Kansas. Miss Lydia Back, director.

4. Scene from *The Imaginary Invalid* as given by Troupe No. 385 at the Centerville, Iowa, High School. Mr. Bernard D. Greeson, director.

5. *The Patchwork Quilt* as given by members of Troupe No. 211 at the Northeastern High School, Detroit, Mich. Directed by Mrs. Joyce M. Osborn.

6. Scene from the production of *Professor, How Could You?* at the Deland, Fla., High School. Directed by Mrs. Horace Gray.

7. Cast for *Spring Fever* at the McCray-Dewey High School, Troy, Ill. Directed by Miss Ann Herron. Thespian Troupe No. 439.

8. Scene from *Seven Sisters* as given by Mr. Ira M. Canfield at the Chardon, Ohio, High School. Troupe No. 334.

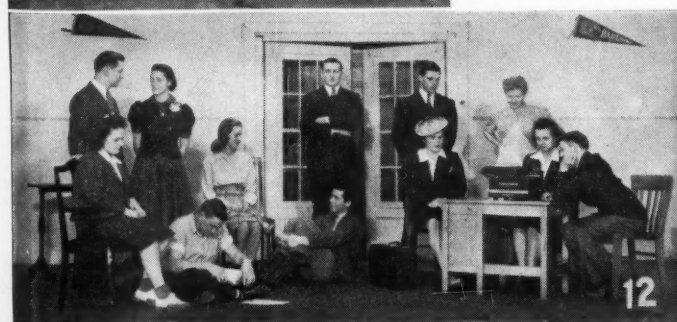
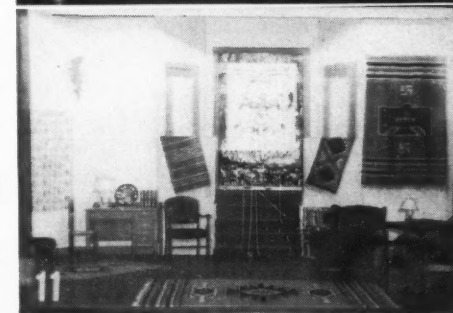
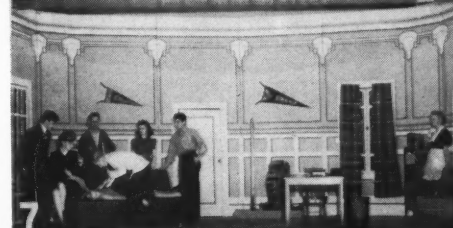
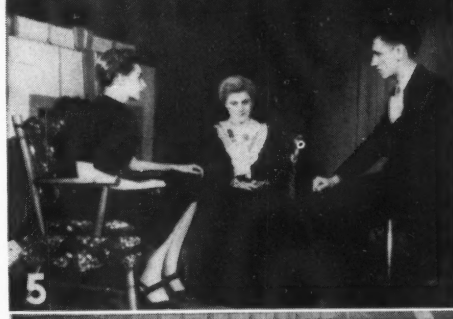
9. Scene from *American Passport* at the Florida State College High School, Tallahassee, Fla. Troupe No. 153. Directed by Mr. Ralph F. Donaldson.

10. Class in Make-up at the Custer, S. Dak., High School. Thespian Troupe No. 384.

11. Stage set for *The Eyes of Tlaloc* at the Alamogordo, N. Mex., High School. Directed by Miss Edith L. Welsheimer. Thespian Troupe No. 81.

12. Cast for *Spring Fever* at the Lovington, Ill., High School. Troupe No. 323. Miss Lucille Klauser, director.

13. Members of Troupe No. 364 at the Jamestown, New York, High School. Miss Myrtle Paetznick, sponsor.



On the High School Stage

News about interesting and important events in the field of high school dramatics. Dramatics directors are urged to contribute brief articles concerning their major activities from month to month.

Chicago, Ill.

AN unusually successful production of the two act play, *Post Road*, was given by the students of the Evening Y. M. C. A. High School (Thespian Troupe No. 61) late in December, with Mr. Herbert M. Carson, troupe sponsor, directing. As a result of the work in this play, as well as participation in other dramatics projects, seven students qualified for membership and were admitted under Mr. Carson's direction late in January.

Provo, Utah

GIVEN as the first major production of the season at the University High School (Thespian Troupe No. 454), *Brief Candle* proved excellent drama fare for students and audience alike. This was the first full-length play given under Thespian auspices since the Troupe was established at this school. The production was directed by Mr. Morris M. Clinger. Hereafter, the production of at least one Thespian play a year will become a regular feature of the dramatics calendar.—*Joene Bowman, Secretary.*

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

UNDER the leadership of Miss Doris E. Marsolais, dramatics students of the Coeur d'Alene High School (Thespian Troupe No. 190) are sponsoring a variety of interesting projects each month. By the end of the year, each member of the Senior Dramatics Club will have completed a scrapbook, containing complete details about costuming, scenery and stage effects, etc. Thespians are meeting on the third Wednesday of each month, with meetings being devoted to reports and play reviews. At the first meeting of the year, Miss Marian McGuire, director of dramatics at the North Idaho Junior College, gave a review of the Broadway hit, *My Sister Eileen*. The new comedy, *Ever Since Eve*, was given by the Junior Dramatics Class on February 3, 5.—*Mabel Jean O'Connor, Secretary.*

Cincinnati, Ohio

STUDENTS of dramatics at the Seton High School (Thespian Troupe No. 371) are enjoying a busy season under the leadership of Sister Marie Palmyre, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor. The first long play of the season, *Wonder Night*, was given by the Seton Players on December 20, 21. (December also witnessed the production of *The Christmas Story* and *Tableaux of the Nativity*.) The Players followed with an unusually successful production of *Don't Take My Penny*, on February 15, 16, as part of the observance of National Drama Week. The schedule for this spring includes the production of *Pink and Patches*, entered in the Southwestern Ohio High School Drama Festival, on March 28, and *A Crown for Mary*. At the time of this writing plans have

been made for a Thespian initiation late in March and a banquet late in April or early in May.—*Patricia Duff, Secretary.*



Scenes of various dramatics activities sponsored by Thespian Troupe No. 187 of the Brownsville, Pa., Senior High School. Directed by Miss Jean A. Donahey.

Terre Haute, Ind.

SPONSOR Robert W. Masters of Troupe No. 378 reports that Jimmy Durham, whose picture appeared on the cover of our January issue (pictorial number) left late in January for the United States Marines. Jimmy was an outstanding member of the dramatics department during his career in high school. Prof. Masters is located at the State Teachers College Laboratory High School.

Barrackville, W. Va.

THE production of *Sun-Up*, given by the Senior Class on December 5, proved unusually successful at the Barrackville High School (Thespian Troupe No. 450), with Miss Mabel M. Everley, directing. Several Thespians had leading roles. The part of Ma Cagle was portrayed by Bonnie Robison. Members of the troupe are looking forward at the time of this writing to their entry in the district drama festival which will be held at the East Fairmont High School on April 11. So far this season nine new members have qualified for membership in the troupe. Miss Everley directs all dramatics activities.—*Thomas Tennant, Secretary.*

Tuscola, Ill.

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe No. 180 of the Tuscola High School held their first initiation of the year on December 17. During the day, the initiates attended classes dressed as Mother Goose characters and saluted the old members by kneeling upon a pillow and saying, "Act well your part; there all the honor lies." In the evening a lovely banquet, with Thespian colors prominent in decorations and place cards, was enjoyed by all. The new members were then formally admitted with an inspiring ritual by candlelight. Those who took the pledge were Dorothy Williams, George Ann Muir, Mary Joan Huber, Kay Rubart, John King, Jim Wulliman, Jim Ross, and Frank Kleiss. The entire program was designed to give the new members an idea of the great things expected of them dramatically. All dramatics activities are directed by Miss Thelma Grumbles.

Crossville, Tenn.

RECENT activities of Troupe No. 428 of the Cumberland High School include the production of the one-act play, *The Cornhusk Doll*, for an assembly program, and a trip to the State Teachers College at Murfreesboro for performance of the operetta, *Hansel and Gretel*. At the time of this writing rehearsals were being held of a three-act play scheduled for production this spring. Miss Ethel W. Walker is directing all activities.—*Robbie Warner, Secretary.*

Wellsburg, W. Va.

THE fall semester saw the production of two major plays at the Wellsburg High School (Thespian Troupe No. 372) under the supervision of Miss Iva G. Brashear. The Dramatics Club opened the season with a performance of *Tricking Tricksters*, on November 9. On December 5, the Senior Class gave *Freckles*, with Miss Faye Barnes directing. Scheduled for production this spring is the Junior Class play, a musical comedy to be given by the Dramatics Club, and entry in the West Virginians High School Drama Festival. At Christmas the Dramatics Club entertained the student body with performances of *Queen's Christmas* and *Pop Reads the Christmas Carol*.—*Betty Dunning, Secretary.*

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Mt. Vernon, Ind.

THE Footlight Performers (Thespian Troupe No. 116) of the Mt. Vernon High School began their season of full-length plays on December 4 with a production of *Sorority House* before a large audience. As part of the school activities preceding the Christmas holidays, the club presented three performances of the one-act play, *Lady of the Market Place*. Earlier in the fall the Footlight Performers sponsored a program of readings given by Edna Means, characterist. Thespians plan to enter the state drama festival at Terre Haute, Ind., this spring. The group also plans to attend several professional performances at Evansville, Ind., during the spring semester. Miss Lucile Hedman has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities.—*Mary Ann Peters, Secretary.*

Offeyville, Kansas

EIGHT new members were added to Troupe No. 317 of the Field-Kindley Memorial High School at an initiation service held on January 13. Following the service the new members were invited to refreshments served on the stage. During the fall semester Thespians presented a choral reading, *I Am a Christian*, as an Armistice Day program. Later in the second choral production, *Twentieth Century Truth*, was given before the Federation of Clubs. The first play of the year, *Mad Hatters*, was given in October by the Junior Class. Miss Lydia Back directs all dramatics.—*Carolyn Morrison, Secretary.*

Bay Village, Ohio

TWO successful performances of *Spring Dance* given by the Senior Class on December 9, 10, opened the present dramatics season at the Parkview School (Thespian Troupe No. 494), with Mrs. Marjorie G. Mink as director. Under Mrs. Mink's leadership, Thespian Troupe No. 494 was established at this school during the latter part of the fall semester. Sixteen students were admitted as charter members. At present much time is being devoted to rehearsals of *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, which will be given on April 17.

Morgantown, W. Va.

TROUPE No. 27 of the Morgantown High School began the present season with a successful performance of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* on November 28. Miss Dorothy Stone White directed, while William Posten served as student director. Members of the troupe plan to entertain Thespian groups that will attend the twelfth annual West Virginia High School Drama Festival at West Virginia University on April 17, 18. The festival is sponsored by the National Thespian Society.

Millersburg, Pa.

THE Dramatics Club production of *Spring Fever* on December 11, 12 marked the beginning of the dramatics season at the Millersburg High School (Troupe No. 79) under the

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leadership of Mr. Eugene F. Williams. The spring semester calls for the production of several one-act plays, one of which will be entered in the contest to be held at the Shippenburg State Teachers College. Mr. Williams became Troupe Sponsor in September.—*Janet Wingard, Secretary.*

Findlay, Ohio

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe No. 451 of the Findlay High School were praised highly for their presentation of the skit, "The First Line of Defense", given at the reception for School Administrators and Delegates held at the Beshler-Wallick Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, on January 3. The program was under the direction of Mr. Wilbur E. Hall.



Members of the installation team at the Rochelle, Illinois, High School, Thespian Troupe No. 291. Miss Josephine E. Wible, sponsor.

Abilene, Texas

"SO far we are having the most successful year since I have been here," writes Mr. Clarence B. Ford, troupe sponsor and dramatics director at the Abilene High School (Thespian Troupe No. 353). "The teachers were high and loud in their praise of our Thespian production of *The Ivory Door* on December 5, and one of the University directors present said our second act was the smoothest thing she had ever seen by a high school group." As a result of this successful production a large number of students became eligible for Thespian members. Mr. Ford reports that there are eighty-five students enrolled in his dramatic club.

Pontiac, Mich.

UNUSUAL success greeted the production of *The Servant in the House* given by the Dramatics Department of the Pontiac High School on December 4, 5, under the direction of Mr. W. N. Viola. A large audience was present for both performances.

Miami, Fla.

THESPIAN TROUPE No. 495 was formally installed at the Andrew Jackson High School on December 8 under the leadership of Miss Marguerite Sweat, dramatics director. Assisting Miss Sweat during the candlelight ceremony were Miss Elizabeth Kelly, Miss Thelma Smith, Mrs. Patricia Mercer and Mrs. Thelma Rowland. The impressive ceremony

was followed with a banquet in the school cafeteria. Thespian colors of blue and gold formed the decorations, and tables for the banquet were arranged in a "T" shape, representing the Thespian insignia. Principal W. W. Mathews addressed the group at the close of the banquet. Charter members are Thespians Joy Summerton, Buddy Hays, Gloria Freedlund, Mark Nairn, Jean Wardell, Reggie Schilling, Betty Jo Kickasola, Arthur Peavy and Dorathea Skinner.

The first production of the new troupe was the three-act comedy, *The Newspaper Bride*, staged on January 23. Thespians observed National Drama Week with the presentation of the one-act play, *Thanks Awfully*, given before the study body. Several other dramatics projects are being sponsored this spring.—Gloria Freedlund, Secretary.

Robbinsdale, Minn.

UNDER the aggressive leadership of Miss Bess V. Sinnott, dramatics students are enjoying a busy season at the Robbinsdale High School (Thespian Troupe No. 352). The year's program of long plays opened with the Junior Class play, *Once And For All*, on November 14, 15. On February 5, 6, Thespians followed with performances of *Magnificent Obsession*. Many one-act plays were given for various occasions during the fall term and others are being given this spring. Each Thespian is required to assist with at least one one-act play sponsored by the Masquers Club, which at present numbers over sixty members. The

Masquers Club is made up of beginners. Members of the dramatics department are attending several professional productions as part of their program for the year. Much interest is being shown at present in the premiere performance of a new play, *Moonlight Herbert*, scheduled for an early date. A group of eighteen members was admitted to Thespian membership in January.

Cuba, Ill.

THIRTEEN new members took the Thespian pledge at an impressive ceremony held on January 21 in the Music Room of the Cuba High School (Thespian Troupe No. 441). A candlelight service was used. The room was beautifully decorated with candles, flowers, and a large model of a Thespian insignia. Several members of the faculty were present. Those who took the pledge were: Harriet Evan, Richard Pittman, Lloyd Clifford, Betty Lemon, Lila Mae Rock, Mary McKinley, Shirley Phillips, Bernita Ann Hageman, Forrest Pwell, Mary Ruth Bonnett, Dane Dilts, Charlene Howerter, and Bruce Mosher. Miss Lorraine Anderson sponsors Troupe No. 441.—Marjorie Price, Secretary.

Miami, Fla.

THE season for members of Troupe No. 327 started early in the fall with the production of several one-act plays. The production of an original three-act play, *The Star Is Red*, by Troupe President Harry Durant attracted much attention. National Drama Week in February was observed with the production of the one-acts, *The Lost Kiss* and *The Flattering Word*, given before a meeting of all Thespian Troupes in the Miami area. Mrs. Rochelle I. Williams, Regional Director for Florida, has charge of dramatics and Thespian activities.—Judith Weiss, Secretary.

Sylvania, Ohio

FOURTEEN new members took the Thespian pledge at a candlelight recognition ceremony at the Burnham High School on December 8, under the direction of Miss Margaret Fairchild. As a part of the ceremony Miss Fairchild explained the meaning of the Thespian Society to the initiates. Honorary membership was conferred upon Mr. Ira Baumgartner and Mrs. Lora Randall. A short program consisting of readings and musical selections followed the service. Those who took the pledge were: William Whitney, Elizabeth Swaim, Watson Gruber, Rosemary Hittler, Marjorie Kelb, William Burnes, William Comstock, Gisela Herweck, Don Smith, Arlene Strohl, Jeanne McConnell, Edith Kohler, Ruth Ann Apsey, and Eddie Howard.

Whapeton, N. Dak.

MEMBERS of Troupe No. 26 of the Whapeton High School opened their dramatics season with the presentation of three one-act plays early in November. They were later repeated at an assembly held at the State School of Science, on November 16. The Junior Class play, *Ever since Eve*, was given by Thespians on January 9. This was followed with the initiation of fourteen new members on January 20. The troupe now boasts an enrollment of twenty-eight members. National Drama Week was observed with the presentation of a one-act play. The Senior Class will give its play on March 27. Miss Ida Erstad has charge of the dramatics program.—Margaret Klosterman, Secretary.

Spanish Fork, Utah

"DESPITE many obstacles, this year has proved very successful for dramatics," writes Marion E. Nelson, secretary for Thespian Troupe No. 25 of the Spanish Fork High School. "Our first production, *Stage Door*, was given on November 13, 14. The audience



Members of Thespian Troupe No. 16 of the Harrisburg, Illinois, Township High School broadcasting from Station WEBQ. Radio activities are under the direction of Mrs. Loly F. Eddy, Troupe Sponsor.

received it very enthusiastically. National Drama Week, in February, was observed with an assembly program and birthday ball. The Senior Class play, *Young April*, was given to large audiences on March 19, 20. As a result of the work done in this play, and in the music department presentation of *The Firefly*, a large number of students will be admitted to membership on March 26. The play, *Tuber-Roses*, has been chosen by the Troupe for the drama festival at the Brigham Young University on April 2, 3, 4."

Revere, Mass.

THE performance of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* on January 12 was unusually successful for members of the Dramatics Club of the Revere High School (Thespian Troupe No. 156). The play was directed by Miss June Hamblin, with Miss Emily L. Mitchell as faculty manager.

Logan, Iowa

THE Logan High School dramatics club joined the National Thespian Society on November 24 at a special ceremony conducted by members of the Troupe of the Missouri Valley High School. Each understudy was required to present a characterization before taking the Thespian pledge which was given by Mr. D. L. Liercke, sponsor for the Missouri Valley Troupe. After the installation ceremony, one hundred guests attended the reception given in honor of the new members. Mr. Liercke, Howard Kellogg, president of the visiting Troupe, Russell Pearson, president of the Logan Thespian Troupe, and Miss Genevieve Huber, founder and sponsor for the new Troupe, were in the receiving line.

As its first major production of the season, the Dramatics Club gave *Lena Rivers*, in October. In February the club followed with a performance of Moliere's *The Imaginary Invalid* given during National Drama Week. An interesting project for Thespians late in January was their visit to a local theatre where the mechanism of the projection machine was explained to them.—*Consuelo Gerratt, Corresponding Secretary.*

Olney, Ill.

AS part of their contribution to the year's dramatics program, members of Troupe No. 292 gave two performances of *A Christmas Carol* late in December before students of the Olney High School. Several students have been admitted to membership during the past months, and others will qualify as the result of their work in dramatics this spring. Miss Claribel Lee has charge of dramatics.—*Willard Eyer, Secretary.*

Chowchilla, Calif.

AN outstanding dramatics success of this season at the Chowchilla High School (Thespian Troupe No. 434) was the production of *Kind Lady*, given under the direction of Sponsor Frank Delamarter during the fall semester. For the second long play of the year, Thespians gave *The Moonstone*, a dramatization of the novel of the same name. Although the play presented several production problems, due in part to several "talky" spots in the script, it was well received by the audience. "The players felt repaid for their efforts, even though several had the feeling that the requirements were a little beyond them," writes Mr. Delamarter. The third long play of the year, *Yes and No*, was given in February. Several students qualified for membership in the Troupe as a result of their work in these productions.

Cristobal, Canal Zone

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe No. 217 of the Cristobal High School are doing their part in the interests of national defense. During the fall term they gave a performance of *Skidding* before a packed auditorium. Later they were invited to give a repeat performance for the Atlantic Morale Department of the



Scene from the production of *Peg O' My Heart* as given by members of Thespian Troupe No. 185 of the Montpelier, Idaho, High School. Directed by Miss Virginia Ekins.

United States Army. The large number of soldiers present enjoyed the performance and wrote many letters to the players complimenting them on their effort. This season all dramatics activities are under the direction of Mr. William Wellons. Several projects for the spring semester were being considered at the time of this writing.—*Alfred Muschett, Troupe President.*

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

SUCCESS greeted the production of the new comedy, *Ever Since Eve*, given by the Senior Class of the Franklin School (Thespian Troupe No. 468), on December 12. Miss Geraldine Green, Troupe Sponsor, directed. Much interest is being shown at present in the one-act play, *The Devil Comes to Alcaraz*, which the Troupe is entering in the Iowa Play Production Festival this spring. Several other dramatics projects are scheduled for this spring.

Fort Stockton, Texas

SEVERAL members of Thespian Troupe No. 33 had roles in the production of the Senior Class play, *Right Mr. Wright*, given on December 12, with Mrs. R. K. Blackshear directing. The fall semester also included the production of *Fireman, Save My Child* for Halloween, *Gratitude*, given for an assembly program, and *Undertow*, staged as a classroom project by the dramatics club. Four new members were added to the Troupe in January at a dinner held at the Hotel Stockton.—*Peggy Jean Montgomery, Secretary.*

Caldwell, Idaho

THE dramatics season for members of Troupe No. 407 at the Caldwell High School began with the production of *Janey's One-Track Mind*, given by the Senior Class on December 5. The Thespian production of *Leave It To Psmith* was given on March 28, with Miss Annabel Anderson directing. A formal initiation at which time twelve students were admitted to membership was held on January 30. Thespians exchanged assembly programs with the Troupe at Emmett, Idaho, on February 6.—*Elaine Prince, Secretary.*

Snyder, Texas

THE production of *It's Papa Who Pays* proved thoroughly enjoyable for the large audience present on February 3 at the Snyder High School. The play was given for the benefit of the School Band. Thespians had prominent roles, with Miss Rose Marie Clawson directing. Thespian Troupe No. 102 is located at this school.

Burley, Idaho

MEMBERS of Troupe No. 111 of the Burley Senior High School played leading roles in the production of the all-school play, *Incognito*, given on February 5, 6, under the direction of Mr. E. J. Ryan. The Troupe observed National Drama Week, February 8-16. Plans are now being made for the production of the popular comedy, *What A Life*, some time in April.—*Betty Jean Rustay, Secretary.*



Mrs. Gordon G. Mark administers the Thespian pledge to the charter members of Thespian Troupe No. 36 at the Marlinton, West Virginia, High School. At the extreme right stands Mr. Reed Davis, a member of the former Troupe at this school and now on the faculty of Marlinton High School.

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MEMBERS of the Petrolini Troupe No. 324 of the Wyoming High School have taken an active part in the Black Hawk Speech Forum in which school problems were considered. Plans are now being made for a banquet honoring over one hundred students from five neighboring high schools who took part in the Forum. The season of major plays opened on October 30 with a successful performance of *Heart Trouble*, staged by Miss Margaret Meyn as the All-School play. Thespian observed National Drama Week with a performance of *The Happy Journey*. The Dramatics and Music Departments had joint

sponsorship of the Christmas pageant, *One Night in Bethlehem*. Miss Margaret L. Meyn has charge of dramatics and supervises Thespian activities.—*Eileen LaPayne, Secretary.*

Lookout, W. Va.

MEMBERS of the Troupe of the Gauley Bridge High School conducted the formal installation of a Thespian Troupe at the Nuttall High School on January 28, with the ceremony being performed in the presence of the entire student body. Eleven students were given the Thespian pledge, with Mrs. Eva Lilly Crosby as troupe sponsor. At the first meeting of the troupe, Joe Hill was elected

president, while Van Skaggs was given the post of vice-president. As its first activity, the troupe celebrated National Drama Week with a performance of the one-act play, *Elmer*.—*Ruth Fitzwater, Secretary.*

Massillon, Ohio

THE January number of the "Thespian Masque," a monthly letter published by members of Troupe No. 178 of the Washington High School, announced that plans for the production of *The Star-Wagon* were unexpectedly postponed due to Mr. M. W. Wickersham being called to army service. Mr. Wickersham has directed dramatics for several seasons at this school.

Scene from *Minnie Fields*, as given by members of Thespian Troupe No. 386 of the Marietta, Ohio, High School, at the first National High School Drama Conference. Awarded highest rating in Section A of Play Production Festival. Directed by Mr. R. G. Ritzenour.





Scene from the three-act comedy, *Second Fiddle*, as given by members of Thespian Troupe No. 480 at the Idaho Falls, Idaho, High School. Mr. Elmer S. Crowley, director.

Marked Tree, Ark.

AN interesting series of activities marked the celebration of National Drama Week at the Marked Tree High School (Thespian Troupe No. 301) during February 10-18. The program included the production of *The Trouble at Satterlee's*, attendance of the troupe in a body at the Baptist Church, *A Speech Patch Jamboree*, and a patriotic finale entitled *The Call of the Flag*. All activities were under the supervision of Mrs. Marie Thost Pierce, troupe sponsor and dramatics director.

Evansville, Indiana

THE all-school production, *Penrod*, with Thespians of Troupe No. 474 taken lead-roles, was given on October 22, 23, at the

Reitz High School as the first major play of the current season, with Miss Mildred Karch directing. The Christmas season was appropriately observed with performances of *Peace Be Unto You*, on December 17, 18. In February, Thespians were responsible for the production of four plays by the children's theatre. As a special project of the troupe in February, Thespians sorted and laundered the school's costumes, and catalogued them for future use. Miss Karch is enjoying an unusually successful year in dramatics.—*Mary Schweitzer, Secretary.*

Drew, Miss.

A FIVE-DAY program marked the observance of National Drama Week at the Drew High School. The schedule got underway on Monday with the formal installation of

Thespian Troupe No. 355 under the direction of Miss Jayne Styles. Fourteen students took the Thespian pledge as charter members. After the impressive ceremony, Miss Mary Margaret Fugler of Delta State Teachers College, Cleveland, Mississippi, gave an inspiring reading of *The White Cliffs of Dover*, by Alice Duer Miller. On Tuesday, two programs were given before the student body. Wednesday was observed with the production of a radio play, *Jean-Marie*, over station WRM, at Greenwood. A radio program for chapel was the major activity for Thursday. The week came to a happy ending on Friday with the presentation of the one-act play, *The Pampered Darling*, before the entire student body. Miss Styles reports that new interest in dramatics has developed as a result of her Thespian membership. A number of projects will have been sponsored by Troupe No. 355 by the time the year comes to a close.

Boulder, Colo.

Seven Sisters, given on October 22 by the Dramatics Club, marked the beginning of the 1941-42 season at the Boulder Senior High School (Thespian Troupe No. 60). The Senior Class followed with a second major production on December 19. *The Cat and the Canary* was under consideration by the Seniors at the time of this writing. An impressive Thespian initiation is being planned for the close of the present semester.—*Margaret Lu Crosman, Secretary.*

Urbana, Ill.

THREE major plays are included on the playbill for the present season at the Urbana High School (Thespian Troupe No. 161). The Senior Class play, *Tish*, opened the season on November 13. Thespians followed with a successful production of *The Two Orphans*, on January 16. The third play, *Cinderella*, is tentatively scheduled for production on April 6, 7, 8. Mrs. Ethel Hamilton directs dramatics and sponsors the Troupe. The season also includes the production of a number of one-act plays. *Carl Aron, Secretary.*

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EDITED BY H. T. LEEPER

Review Staff: Donald Woods, Blandford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Kari Natalie Reed, Elmer S. Crowley, Mary Ella Bovee, Helen Movius and Virginia Leeper.

Reviews appearing in this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. The opinions expressed are those of the reviewer, and mention of a book or play in this department does not necessarily mean that such a publication is recommended by THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN.

Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York.

They Did Away with Uncle, a mystery play in three acts, by Joseph Scott, 5 m., 6 w. Royalty free provided 11 books are purchased. An entertaining whodunit, rather above the average of non-royalty offerings, giving several new twists to the old situation of the grasping heirs of the dying millionaire. The play takes place in the bedroom of the dying man, and, while tense enough to provide the desired thrills, is never allowed to become morbid. As in the case of so many mystery thrillers, the solution will not bear too much examination, and not all the devices are altogether fair to the spectator; but these flaws are apt to pass unnoticed because of the rapidity of the movement of the play. Comedy relief is provided by the newlywed sheriff and his bride—*Blandford Jennings*.

I'm In the Army Now!, a domestic comedy in three acts, by Ned Albert. 5 m., 8 w. Royalty free provided 12 books are purchased. Here is an attempt to provide a play appropriate to the present moment—a story of a son who is drafted and who goes to camp over the frenzied opposition of his over-solicitous mother, and who returns on furlough, transformed, to extend his transformation to his disorganized family. This is the kind of play that will be side-splitting about fifty years from now, when revived in the manner of *After Dark* or *The Drunkard*. As it stands now, however, the plot is too thin for the length of the play, which is padded with long passages of jokes in vaudeville style. The play is successful neither as farce nor as thoughtful comedy, and is never quite decided as to which it is intended to be.—*Blandford Jennings*.

On Rainy Afternoons, six indoor plays for children, by Robert Sloane. Royalty free. Clever dramatizations of certain of Aesop's Fables, written at the 7- to 11-year age level. Children of these ages would enjoy these plays greatly and could do them easily in living-room, classroom, or playroom. In its present form the script might prove beyond the reading ability of the younger children; the help of an older child or an adult might be needed. This book (together with others that are in preparation) is recommended for dramatics classes of young children, for Cub Scouts, and in any other situation where organized dramatic work is wanted for children of this age.—*Blandford Jennings*.

Dramatists Play Service, 6 East 39th St., New York, N. Y.

Fun To Be Free, patriotic pageant, by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. No production fee. Seventeen speaking parts; numbers in groups, both men and women, may vary. This pageant can be adapted to any type of presentation, without sacrificing the effectiveness of its message; it can be a public performance, or a classroom project, it is usually interesting with or without costumes, lights, or scenery; it can be done with a minimum of rehearsals and line-learning; in fact, it offers a chance for experimentation on the part of any director. The speeches in free verse have a patriotic swing about them that makes reading simple and stirring. Every school, as well as every truly American organization, should have the opportunity of being a part of this fine pageant, either as a producing group or as an audience.—*Mary Ellen Bovee*.

Row, Peterson and Co., Evanston, Ill.

Bobino, a three-act play, by Stanley Kauffmann. This is a play particularly adapted to young audiences. It employs a good story which is well told by means of verse, singing and dancing. Musical scores are included in the play book. The cast is divided into 9 men and 3 women and include such interesting characters as: Bulzaboo, a middle-aged giant, a Princess, a Horse (that speaks), a Hen (who also speaks and sings) and Bobino, the son of the cobbler. Most of the story is told in delightful verse which is interspersed with brief bits of dialogue.—*Marion Stuart*.

Good Night Ladies, a three-act farce, by Edwin S. Day. 7 m., 5 w. Percentage royalty. The story of this play takes place in the large living-room of the Raleigh home which is near the campus of Grayson College, in Virginia. The Raleighs—Helen, Jane and Sam—have inherited an old house near the campus. Since they are on the point of losing it, they all agree to turn it into a dormitory. Two aunts promise to serve as House Mothers. On the evening that they are expected, they send a telegram postponing their arrival. Complications immediately arise. The Dean of Women refuses to send any girls to the house until the chaperones are present. "Jug" Brown, a friend, and Sam impersonate the aunts by borrowing wigs and some clothes from the girls. There is a Professor Dexter that is not fooled by the impersonators, but he refuses to disclose the secret. In fact, he even goes so far as to help the girls. The Dean discovers the hoax and threatens to have them all expelled. The Professor receives a message that he has been appointed the next College Prexy and a second telegram arrives from the aunts saying that they would arrive early in the morning. The Dean is given permission to make the opening inaugural address, the girls get the roomers and everything ends happily for the farce. *Good Night, Ladies* is excellent entertainment which is filled with good lines and laughable situations.—*Marion Stuart*.

Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Ave., New York City.

The Gilded Lily, Frank Vreeland's dramatization of the copyrighted motion picture of the same title, produced and released by Paramount Pictures, Inc., in 1935, and based on a story by Melville Baker and John Kirkland. Royalty upon application. 3 acts, in one unit set, 18 scenes. 6 m., 6 w., extras. This light bit of comedy concerns the rather well-worn plot of the young girl, who, in dreaming of a Sir Galahad and in reaching for the stars, fails to see the love and happiness right at her fingertips. The charming stenographer in this case is swept off her feet by an English nobleman, already drowned in family tradition and influence; but at the final curtain she returns to enjoy a bag of popcorn on a park bench with her old friend the reporter. In all of the scenes, there are only two actual changes of locale—a section of a park, and the deck of a ship. However, an experienced stage crew is necessary. The extras in the cast make this comedy a possibility for the organization with a large membership.—*Mary Ella Bovee*.

Annabel Takes A Tour, a comedy in 3 acts, based upon the copyrighted motion picture of

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

the same title, produced and released by RKO Pictures, Inc., in 1938, and dramatized by Edward R. Sammis. Royalty upon application. 3 m., 4 w., extras. One set. This play involves the lives of "arty" people from the two worlds of drama and literature; and so it is breezy, fast-moving, amusing, and completely ridiculous. Needless to say, it ends in a romantic curtain, with everyone happily content. Act III, with one scene taking place before the curtains of the stage and the other taking place backstage, offers an interesting departure from traditional staging. In Scene I, part of the cast is actually seated in the audience, and this scene of Annabel's personal appearance provides one of the highlights of the play. The small cast of major characters, supplemented by extras, and the simplicity of scene changes, make this comedy a good selection for large amateur groups—*Mary Ella Bovee*.

The Northwestern Press, 2200 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

Loving Enemies, a comedy in 3 acts, by Dana Thomas. 5 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$25. This sparkling comedy paints a convincing picture of the American "melting pot," and does it in a way that brings out a most timely lesson in Americanism. Conflict with the spirit of Totalitarianism is well handled without recourse to the use of any implausible spies as members of the cast. The play concerns two families: one English, the other German. The two have been the closest of friends for years. When the German daughter and the English son announce their engagement, the parents are suddenly at swords' points, because they both want their children to marry one of their own nationality. In the end, the realization dawns upon them that they are no longer English or German, but have become American, and that the marriage is an ideal match.—*H. T. Leeper*.

John Doe, American, a romantic drama in 3 acts, by Arthur Jearue. 6 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$25. A man warns an FBI official of a plot to blow up a troop train. In an attempt to prove he is not a tramp, but a responsible person whose story should be credited, he tells his life story. A flashback then carries us back to 1921 and we see his romance, marriage, struggles to become a successful author, and forced disappearance when unjustly charged with bank embezzlement. Eighteen years later his big chance comes to establish his innocence and pick up life where he left it, but he gives it all up for fear of spoiling his daughter's happiness. Convinced, and moved by his plea to be allowed to do something for his country, the FBI agent allows him to have the job of discovering the bomb—which will mean death. The changes in setting are easily effected and add a variety and unusualness that makes this a play well worth using.—*H. T. Leeper*.

Wetmore Declamation Bureau, 1631 So. Paxton St., Sioux City, Iowa.

Murder With Magic, a mystery comedy in 3 acts, by Robert St. Clair. 7 m., 7 w., extras. No royalty. The scene of this play is the stage of a high school auditorium. The action takes place before, during, and after a benefit performance of magic before a local audience. During the performance the magician is murdered while doing his trunk-escape act. From there on the play is given over to the solving of the murder. People in the play are the magician and the mind reader, and their assistants; the local principal and policeman; and people from the audience. This is something different from the average detective mystery and would be very easy to do, since the staging calls for little beyond the bare stage.—*Harry T. Leeper*.

Walter H. Baker Co., 178 Tremont St., Boston, Massachusetts.

Too Many Stars, a three-act farce, by Jean Provence. 12 w. No royalty, but the purchase of 10 copies is necessary for production rights. This farce is an adequate vehicle for women's clubs, or for dramatic organizations in small

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schools where the membership is largely female. Three of the cast are young, and the others may vary in age and characterization, allowing for much freedom of interpretation. The action is sufficiently fast; and the lines easy to memorize and to deliver. The plot is very simple, involving the very familiar and popular case of mistaken identity. An antique vase, into which several persons have put not only their worldly goods, but their faith and their future as well, also figures prominently in this play, which takes place in a tourist home. *Too Many Stars* belongs definitely to the amateur stage.—*Mary Ella Bovee*.

After Munich, a play in one act, by Frances Kilroe. 5m. 1w. One simple interior. Royalty, \$5. This little play reflects keenly the troubled background of present-day Europe. It is the story of the young wife of a German army officer who attempts to effect the escape of a great Czech scientist. Her heroic struggle and failure make the piece a bit of very intense drama which is borne on with great restraint through to its climax. This play affords excellent opportunity for fine acting.—*Daniel Turner*.

Anybody's Million, a farce in 3 acts, by Jean Provence. 5m. 5w. One living room set. Royalty, \$10. Warren Cameron, a nervous young man, returns a lady's pocket-book, whereupon Felipe, her fiance, chases Warren to bleak and lonely Thornton Mansion, where resides the insane Luther Thornton with his eccentric crew. One complication leads to another, but eventually all the difficulties are ironed out. This is a very rapid-moving farce which presents a great variety of character study. Here is an excellent play for high schools who are looking for some gay, innocent bit of frivolity with some good "character" parts.—*Daniel Turner*.

Dramatic Publishing Co., 59 East Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

Don't Keep Him Waiting, a comedy in 3 acts, by Anne Coulter Martens. 6 m., 6 w.

Royalty, \$10. This is a charming story of a girl who is the wage earner and payer-of-bills for a happy-go-lucky, irresponsible family of father, aunt, brother, and sister. When she loses her job without the family taking the slightest cognizance of the financial situation they are now in, she decides the worm must turn and starts behaving just as frivolously as they do, in the hope that this will bring them to their senses. For a while the plan only brings more complications, but in the end the rest of the family really wake up and display sterling qualities. Very good high school material.—*Harry T. Leeper*.

Galloping Ghosts, a mystery-comedy in 3 acts, by Dora Georgia Thomas and William Ellis Jones. 5 m., 6 w. No royalty. Unable to get his impecunious but independent aunt to accept financial assistance, her well-to-do nephew hides some gold bars in the house and arranges for a waitress to pose as a clairvoyant and pretend to find them by supernatural means. The waitress and an accomplice plan to steal the gold. Three adolescents get wise to everyone's plans and decide to save the gold, meanwhile having a lot of fun playing ghost. Once "discovered," the gold changes hands rapidly, to the accompaniment of much laughter, and, in the end, the original bars which had been hidden by the old lady's father, turn up also. High school material.—*Harry T. Leeper*.

Almost Summer, a comedy in 3 acts, by Christopher Sergel. 5 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$10. In the midst of the terrifically overpowering problems of high school age people we find Paul Jones. With graduation just three days off, he starts a "cram session" on a course he must pass with a high grade, or spend the vacation in summer school, away from his best girl. Competition for his girl is keen, and an easy chance to cheat on the "exam" tempts and almost defeats him. However, he proves true in the end and makes a strong finish for an interesting play. Good for high school.—*Virginia Leeper*.

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a play by Elizabeth McFadden, and see what happens again and again as it comes to its climax: "There is a long pause while Victoria sits brooding over her failure. Then . . . determination brings her to her feet . . . Anne crosses the hall toward the stairs.

Victoria: Wait a moment, Anne. You mustn't go without your pearls.

Anne: It's all right. If you want them, keep them.

Victoria: No, no. Rip wants you to have them. Come in.

(Anne enters reluctantly. Victoria locks the door behind her.)

Anne: (Frightened) What . . . ?

Victoria: I am going to show you my treasure room.

(She goes up to the panel and touches the hidden spring. The section of wall moves slowly out revealing the steel door . . . The steel door swings slowly open showing the darkness beyond.)

Anne: Oh! What . . . ?

Victoria: (Holding out her hand to Anne.) Rip wants you to have your pearls. Come! . . .

Then, an excited voice from some member of the audience: "No, no! Don't go in there! Don't you do it!"

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Our Periodicals in Review

REVIEWED BY MRS. HARRISON J. MERRILL

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OUR COLONIAL THEATRE. By Vivian Turner. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* for December, 1941. Senior Thespians and directors will enjoy reading the detailed account of our Colonial Theatre which extended over a period of 100 years. Not 50 years after the settlement of Jamestown, there was some evidence of dramatic activity. Legal records show that several actors were summoned to court for producing a play, but, fortunately, they were exonerated. Colonial players had a particularly bad time in Pennsylvania as laws of both church and state were levied against them. Despite these repulsions, Philadelphia joined Williamsburg, Baltimore, Annapolis, and New York in becoming the theatrical centers of Colonial America.

MAKE-UP, THE FORGOTTEN ART. By Richard V. Corson. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* for December, 1941. While the articles in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* are written primarily for teachers of speech, there is no reason why a Junior or Senior Thespian should not derive a good deal from this account.

Professor Corson of Louisiana State University deplores that lack of knowledge, training, and skill in the art of make-up among our drama directors in schools and amateur theaters. In fact, he maintains that few universities in this country offer adequate courses in the subject taught by expert instructors. To check your own technique, answer the ten questions he has included in the article. You may be surprised.

THEATRE IN CHINATOWN. By Theodore Strauss. *New York Times* for February 15, 1942. Down under the heavy span of New York's Manhattan Bridge between Chatham Square and the East River stands an old Chinese theater. Although 10,000 miles from its homeland and 6,000 years from the present-day hub-bub, this old theater plays the classics nightly to Chinese laundrymen and merchants who gather in its drafty auditorium. The play, which begins at 8:00 P. M. and lasts well after midnight, retells the legends of old China in the traditional manner. Neither the stilted acting has changed nor the symbolic stage draperies. Even the shrill voice of the heroine and the still shriller music of the orchestra remains as it was when the Chinese dragon first sanctioned the spoken drama many years ago.

IN TIME TO COME. *Scholastic* for January 19-24, 1942. The important aspect of the Woodrow Wilson play, *In Time to Come*, is to warn the nation against making the same mistakes it did at the close of World War I. "It is important now in 1942 to review that particular period because the chance of creating a lasting

peace after we've won the present fight makes it imperative that we avoid making the mistakes of 1918-1919 all over again." The play is recommended to make good reading as well as good drama.

THE GLENVILLE HIGH SCHOOL THEATER. By Eugene C. Davis. *Quarterly Bulletin of National Theatre Conference* for December, 1941. If your dramatic department is negligible and your stage equipment inadequate, this article regarding the growth of the Glenville High School Theater should be a real inspiration. Very likely your equipment is no worse than that with which Mr. Davis started in the fall of 1930. Despite many handicaps, this theater plant has become one of the outstanding of its kind in the country largely through the undying determination of its director. He now has a three-year course in dramatics in which to build a well grounded knowledge of the theater arts.

PRODUCING A PLAY FESTIVAL. By C. R. Kase. *Emerson Quarterly* for February, 1942. Since this is drama festival time, Professor Kase's article on the machinery necessary to produce such a festival will be valuable to Thespian directors. First, he recommends an organization of responsible persons who can be relied upon to handle each phase: invitations, publicity, rules, prizes, list of approved plays, a timetable, entrance forms, all stage equipment, and innumerable detail. Then he stresses the importance of having one person in every community who will make direct contact with each group entering the contest. He feels that this last phase is the most important.

A FREE THEATRE FOR A FREE PEOPLE. By Katina Paxinou. *Theatre Arts* for February, 1942. This is the fourth of a series of articles on *A Free Theatre for a Free People* written this month by one of the leading actresses of the Greek Royal Theatre. Miss Paxinou will have opened in New York City at the Longacres Theatre in *Hedda Gabler* by the time this article appears.

In this account the author paints the dream of every theater artist in her description of the Greek theater before the Nazi invasion. It seated less than a thousand people; it had the very latest stage equipment; every costume and property was always in perfect accord with the play; the plays produced were the best that world literature had to offer; and the theater project was richly endowed so that there were no financial worries. In addition to the first company of finished players, there was a training school and travelling repertoire company of student actors.

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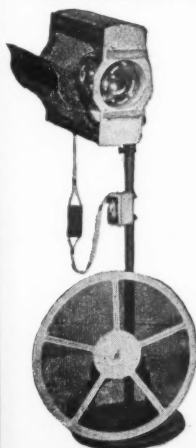
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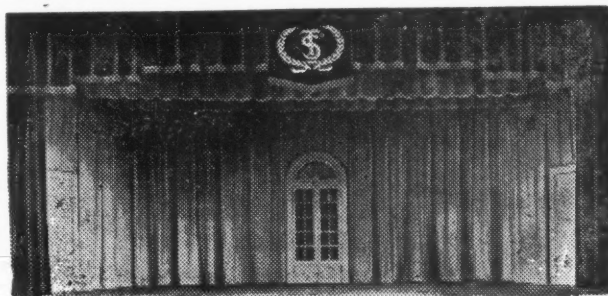


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